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THE LOGOS IN THE PROLOGUE OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

“In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and God (predicate) was the Logos.”

We have here, at the opening of St. John's Gospel and arranged in climactic succession, three ponderous propositions concerning the Logos. It can hardly be questioned that, in the use of this term, it is not the purpose of the writer to introduce a hitherto unfamiliar conception within the circle of Christian readers. When John wrote the fourth Gospel, the name Logos evidently constituted a part of the Christian vocabulary as a current designation of Jesus Christ. That it is found only in the Johannean writings seems to point to a comparatively late origin. The name occurs four times in our prologue. Here it is used absolutely, without any modifier. In Rev. 19, 13 we have the phrase “the Word of God” (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ), while in 1 John 1, 1 the expression is “the Word of life” (ὁ λόγος τῆς ζωῆς). These are the only passages in which the title is found. The question, therefore, that confronts us at the outset is as to whence this idea and name were derived.

Harnack, after the manner of the Tuebingen school, discerns in the employment of this title the prelude toward the blending of Christianity with Greek philosophy. According to his opinion, the writer of this prologue is the forerunner of those Christian “teachers who, prior to their

conversion to Christianity, had been adherents of the Platonic-Stoic philosophy, and to whom, therefore, the idea of the 'Logos' was an inalienable element in their *Weltanschauung*." He paved the way for those who, in order to embrace Christianity without relinquishing their philosophic notions, boldly conceived the idea of identifying the Logos of their speculations with the historical Christ. This was, in Harnack's view, a most fortunate thing. The identification of the Logos with Jesus Christ "was," he says, "the most important step ever taken in the history of Christian dogma." "Instead of the wholly unintelligible term 'Messiah' a more intelligible one was found at a single stroke; Christology, fluctuating by reason of its multifarious modes of expression, received a fixed form; the world-significance of Christ was established, his mysterious relation to the Deity made clear; Cosmos, reason, and ethics were gathered together in one central idea." This conjunction of the Logos with Jesus "became the decisive point in the coalescence of Greek philosophy with the apostolic legacy, and led the thinking Greeks to the latter."¹) Thus the great stumbling-block was removed. Henceforth the word of Paul no longer applied. After the introduction of the Logos-idea, the Gospel was not "foolishness" to the Greeks. The Logos bridged over the chasm. It was a convenient key that fitted both locks, Christianity on the one hand, the wisdom of the Greeks on the other.

Long before Harnack the historian Gibbon expressed similar views, though with this difference that with him the Apostle John comes in for all the credit for naturalizing the new idea. He says, with an obvious sneer: "A prophet or apostle inspired by the Deity can alone exercise a lawful dominion over the faith of mankind; and the theology of Plato might have been forever confounded with the philosophical visions of the Academy, the Porch, and the Ly-

1) *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 127 sq.

caem, if the name and divine attributes of the Logos had not been confirmed by the celestial pen of the last and most sublime of the Evangelists. The Christian revelation, which was consummated under the reign of Nerva, disclosed to the world the amazing secret that the Logos, who was with God from the beginning, and was God, who had made all things, and for whom all things had been made, was incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ."¹⁾

Accordingly, the idea of the Logos is supposed to have been imported from contemporary philosophy. It is an exotic plant transferred from the gardens of the academy to the vineyard of the Christian Church. The author of the fourth Gospel is declared to be indebted to pagan philosophers for the unique title that he applies to Jesus Christ.

However, such a contention is beset with insurmountable difficulties. For the present, we shall state, in a general way, what seems to be the fatal Achilles heel of this position. If, as the exponents of the theory maintain, the author of this prologue is a disciple of Plato, or more particularly of Philo, the chief representative of Neoplatonism, he certainly kept all his philosophical ideas out of sight while writing the fourth Gospel, which is singularly free from all metaphysical speculation. Nowhere do we find any attempt to make the pagan Logos conception dovetail into the Christology of the Church; nowhere any attempt to mediate between Christianity and Alexandrianism. If, on the other hand, the Johannean authorship be conceded, an absorption of heathen elements into the lump of Christian doctrine becomes absolutely preposterous. Christianity, in its genuine form, never resorts to expedients of this kind in order to commend itself to the acceptance of men. Such methods are alien to its spirit. It is rigidly and uncompromisingly exclusive. Paul might become a Greek to the Greek, but never in the sense of watering down his

1) *Decline and Fall*, edition by Milman, vol. I, p. 305 sq.

Gospel of Christ crucified to suit the Greek's palate, as is abundantly shown by his writings. In like manner, we cannot, with any show of reason, ascribe to John a purpose so repugnant to the tenor of sound Christianity as the assumption of a fusion between the heathen Logos theory and the historical person of Jesus Christ would imply. Not such a weak temporizer was this "son of thunder" and "pillar of the church." It is he that records the Savior's interview with Nicodemus, which urges the necessity of the rebirth as the indispensable condition of entering the kingdom of God. Nor would he have hesitated to affirm the same truth over against the Logos speculations of the Platonists or the Stoics.

Since, however, the Logos of St. John is persistently traced to a philosophic source, more especially to Philo of Alexandria, it may not be amiss to inquire into this matter a little more closely. Philo was a Jewish philosopher who lived at Alexandria in the first century of our era. I think we might call him a Jew with a Greek head. At any rate, his unbounded admiration for the philosophy of the Greeks betrayed him into the most painful efforts to bring his Jewish faith into harmony with the former. By means of an allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament he sought to effect a synthesis between it and the doctrines of the Platonic and Stoic schools. It is needless to say that he set himself an impossible task. With all his allegorizing, spiritualizing, rationalizing, his attempt was a failure. Moses and Plato could not go hand in hand. Philo's system, if the word can be used, is full of contradictions and incongruities. When he locks arms with the Greeks, his Judaism will not follow, and when he cannot quite free himself from the latter, Plato eludes his grasp. As the inevitable consequence of its eclectic character, the philosophy of Philo may fitly be characterized as a *rudis indigestaque moles*, an illimitable, undefinable *tohu vabohu*, without order or coherence. Platonic, Stoic, and Jewish elements are jumbled

together in motley profusion, resulting in a patchwork more parti-colored than Joseph's coat. One of the fundamental tenets in Philo's speculation is that God is an undeterminable essence existing neither in time nor in space, without any affections or qualities (*ἄποιος*), without a name even (*ἄῤῥῳτος*), and hence absolutely beyond the reach of human cognition or apprehension (*ἀκατάληπτος*). God is a pure, abstract, ethereal being; and to predicate of Him any quality whatsoever, would be to reduce Him to the sphere of the finite, and consequently to undo Him. In this respect, Philo anticipated the *omnis determinatio est negatio* of another Jewish philosopher who lived in more recent times, of Baruch Spinoza.

It appears, then, that according to Philo there is an impassable gulf fixed between God and the material world. The God of Philo is incapable of contact with finite things. He can have nothing to do with matter. Not only does the very essence of the Deity forbid such an idea, but the nature of matter as well; matter being considered as intrinsically evil. Consequently, Philo required an intermediary to fill up the chasm between his transcendental God and the world. And such an agent he found in the philosophy of Plato and the Stoics. Plato had spoken of the Logos as the "archetypal idea" (*ἰδέα ἰδεῶν*); the Stoics used the same term in the sense of the "world-reason," the operative principle that pervades all matter (*ὁ κοινὸς λόγος ὁ διὰ πάντων ἐρχόμενος*). This conception was adopted by Philo in order to give a philosophic interpretation to his Judaism. By means of the Logos, Philo endeavored to find a connecting link between God as abstract being and the world of matter. His representations of this intermediate being are hesitating, discordant, contradictory. Philo is feeling for something which is too elusive to be grasped. What this Logos of Philo really is can hardly be said. There is, in particular, a continual fluctuation between the personal and impersonal. Now it seems to be endowed with personality,

and then again it seems to be only a property of the Deity. This fluctuation is easily accounted for. The great difficulty with which Philo found himself confronted was to bring this mediating agent into relationship with God as pure essence on the one hand and with the hard fact of the world on the other. If the Logos appertains to the divine being, it seems to resolve him into an attribute of God; if he is represented as the creator of the world, this function requires a distinct personality. Again, when Philo speaks as a Greek, he calls this being the Logos, or the *ἰδέα ἰδεῶν*, the archetypal idea; when he speaks as a Jew, he calls him the Archangel (*ἀρχάγγελος*), the High-priest (*ἀρχιερεύς*), the interpreter of the mind and will of God (*ἐρμηνεύς καὶ προφήτης*), the image of God (*εἰκὼν*), etc. Philo's Logos is thus a vague, shadowy conception, as unreal to himself, perhaps, as it is to anyone else.

If we now proceed to place the Philonic Logos beside the Johannean, it will appear that there is the widest possible divergence between them. There are no affinities whatever. The only thing in common is the name. To begin with, it is evident from the foregoing that the Logos of Philo is merely a philosophic conception, the joint product of a peculiar theory respecting the nature of the Deity and the fact of the existence of the material universe. The Logos is to Philo a logical and metaphysical necessity. This intermediate agent is the only bond by which he can unite his etherealized God with the finite world. Now, if the author of the fourth Gospel was a disciple of Philo, seeking to open the way for an influx of Greek ideas into the Christian Church, to mediate between Alexandrianism and Christianity, his qualities as an amalgamizer and religion-maker were of a very low order. So far is he from approaching Philo with overtures of peace that he rather throws down the gauntlet as a declaration of war. His representation of the Logos differs *toto caelo* from that of the Hellenizing Jew. St. John is not excogitating for himself a religio-philosophic

theory of the world (*Weltanschauung*). When he declares in the opening verses that the Logos was with God and was God, and that all things were made by Him, this is not to be understood in a Philonic sense, as if the Logos were only a reflection of God, and that without Him God would be doomed to a state of inert and eternal quiescence, but rather to exhibit the true divinity of Christ and the consequent enormity of rejecting Him.

The wholly divergent tendencies of the two writers appear also in another respect. According to Philo, the Logos must ever remain above the sensuous world. Was not matter essentially evil? Was it not the ambition of the full-fledged Neoplatonists to free themselves from the impure fetters of the flesh and to bathe in the sunny ocean of divine existence? "Does not the defilement of the human soul arise from its connection with the body?" The mere thought, therefore, of an *incarnation* of the Logos would have been in the highest degree abhorrent to the tastes and sensibilities of the Alexandrians. What blasphemy to bring the reflection of the Deity into the infectious dungeon from which the souls of the "perfect" sought to escape! Nor does it ever occur to Philo to identify his Logos with the Messiah. And yet the author of our prologue, who is supposed to make "straight the way" for Philonic ideas, bluntly says: *καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο* ("and the Word was made flesh"), a statement which is in itself sufficient to prove that John had no affinity with the thought of the Jew. "St. John," says Edersheim, "strikes the pen through Alexandrianism when he lays it down as the fundamental fact of New Testament history that 'the Logos was made flesh.'"¹⁾

If it be argued that the writer of the fourth Gospel was, as it were, driven to this statement by the exigencies of his position, that is to say, by the dire necessity of bringing

1) *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. I, p. 56.

the Logos of Philo, in one way or another, into connection with the man Jesus, we may answer that, if he had found himself in such a desperate situation, he would have overcome the difficulties in a somewhat different way. He would probably have followed the example of Philo who had ways of his own in dealing with things that seemed too crude and crass. Philo, who is unable to find room in his speculations for the angels, gets rid of these beings, for instance, by resolving them into "immortal ideas" (*ἀθάνατοι λόγοι*). Now how is it that the writer of the fourth Gospel, if, indeed, his aim was to harmonize the doctrine of Philo with the teaching of Christianity, did not have recourse to a similar ingenious device when he found himself face to face with the knotty problem? Why did he not, after the manner of the Docetae, represent the union of the Logos with a material human form as a mere illusion upon the senses of men, instead of rudely shocking the feelings of all orthodox Alexandrians by the unvarnished statement of the incarnation? Why does he not begin to rationalize and spiritualize in order to preserve the Logos from the defiling contact with a real human body? It is to this that the stress of the situation would have driven him if the purpose he had in view had been such as is attributed to him. "If," says Zahn, "John had applied to Christ a Logos-speculation that had sprung up on extra-Christian soil, and, guided by it, had risen to a higher apprehension of the Christ, it would have been inevitable that the sharply-outlined figure of the man Jesus would have been dissolved into a mere shadow and distorted into a phantom."¹⁾

Baur felt the force of this objection so keenly that, in order to sustain the theory we are examining, he was con-

1) "Wenn Johannes eine auf ausserchristlichem Boden gewachsene Logosspeculation auf Christus angewandt und, durch eine solche bestimmt, zu einer hoeheren Auffassung Christi sich aufgeschwungen haette, so waere es unvermeidlich gewesen, dass die festumgrenzte Gestalt des Menschen Jesus schattenhaft zerflossen und geisterhaft verzerrt worden waere." *Einführung in das Neue Testament*, II, p. 541.

strained to explain away v. 14 of the prologue altogether. What John means to say in this verse is, according to Baur's exegesis, not that the Logos actually assumed flesh and blood, but only that He became visible by a kind of theophany. On the contrary, John means just what he says. He says that the Logos became flesh, and his entire Gospel furnishes the best commentary on the meaning of the statement. Jesus is weary with His journey and, seated on a well, asks the Samaritan woman for a drink to quench His thirst (4, 6. 7); He sheds tears at the grave of a friend (11, 35); He is moved and troubled (11, 33); He shudders at the thought of His death (12, 27). In fact, the Savior is represented throughout as a real human person with human affections, in full conformity with the real incarnation of the Logos, so distinctly affirmed in the prologue.

Moreover, it is historically proved that the first readers of John's Gospel did not associate Philonic notions with the Logos. Ignatius, the first clearly speaking witness on behalf of the fourth Gospel, says: "One is God, who has revealed Himself through Jesus Christ, His Son, who is His Word that came forth out of silence and in all things pleased Him, by whom He was commissioned." That is to say, after long silence God at last uttered Himself in His Son Jesus Christ, who for this reason is called the Word. The first who discovered a Logos theory in the prologue, or, rather, who artificially imposed one upon it, were Valentine the Gnostic and Justin "the philosopher."¹

Again, the functions performed in the spiritual world by the Logos of Philo and John, respectively, are totally different. To be sure, Philo calls his Logos the interpreter of God, but this designation must be accepted with very important restrictions. Not only is the Logos as the re-

1) "Valentinus der Gnostiker und Justinus 'der Philosoph' sind die Ersten, welche in dem Prolog eine Logoslehre entdeckt oder vielmehr sie in dieselbe [denselben] hineingedichtet haben." Zahn, *Einleitung*, II, p. 547.

vealer of God wholly unnecessary to the perfect sage, but he is also a very imperfect mediator to those who require his services. According to the Alexandrian teaching, the true philosophic "saint" needs no intermediary of any kind in order to enter into communion with God. He employs a short and easy method. He immerses himself, as it were, into the divine Being by immediate intuition. He arrives at the knowledge of God by ecstatic vision and contemplation. He attains to the possession of the absolute truth, not through any mediation, not even by logical thought, but by a process of mystic enthusiasm in which the reasoning faculty and self-consciousness are entirely suspended and the individual subject coalesces with the object—God. In short, a kind of mental delirium and intoxication constitutes the true way that leads straight to the Deity. As for those who are incapable of this "divine frenzy" and therefore unable to rise to the sublime contemplations of the perfect sage, they must content themselves with the lesser light granted them by the Logos, the subordinate deity (δεύτερος θεός). Not being able to push forward to the perfect model, they must be content to look at the portrait. Accordingly, those who accept the guidance of the Logos never reach the end, God, while those who would arrive at the coveted goal must pass by the Logos entirely.

Contrast with this the teaching of St. John, who declares all access to God to be impossible except by the Logos. The incarnate Logos of St. John says: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." (14, 6.) In v. 12 of the prologue it is said that to those who receive Him by faith the Logos gives *the power to become* the children of God. This verse asserts three things, viz.: Man is by nature not in a relation of sonship to God; he cannot, by his own efforts, enter into this relation; the incarnate Logos alone removes the natural barrier and makes union with God possible. So here again John "strikes the pen" through the Alexandrian program.

Finally, if we compare the Philonic notion that God as absolute being is incapable of contact with the finite world, except through the Logos, with the teaching of John on this point, the gulf between the Jewish philosopher and our Evangelist will become still more apparent. Philo's God is a God afar off. He cannot show forth his power in the sphere of mundane things; and if he could, he would not, for communication with the world would result in defilement. The Logos, therefore, comes in as an obedient servant to relieve him of something so impossible to his nature and derogatory to his character. Now the God of whom John speaks is of an entirely different character. He is not an abstract being, destitute of all attributes and calmly brooding like Brahma in eternal solitude and quiescence. He is a living God, full of intelligence and activity. He is the Father who so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (3, 16.) He worketh even as the Son worketh (5, 17); He raiseth the dead and giveth them life (5, 21), nay, the miracles of Jesus Himself are represented as gifts from the Father (5, 36). Thus He continually exerts His power in the sensuous world, without any fear of soiling His garments. So far is He from requiring the services of an intermediate organ that it is He that *draws* men to Jesus ("No man can come to me," says Jesus, "except the Father who hath sent me draw him," 6, 44), and *gives* unto the Son all that come to Him ("All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," 6, 37). Here, then, we have a conception not only different from, but quite the reverse of, that of Philo, an idea which would have been to Philo the height of unreason.

Such, then, are some of the radical differences between Philo and John in their teaching respecting the Logos, differences not pertaining to surface matters or outward details, but touching the very heart and marrow of the substance itself. If John ever had any sympathy for the

speculations of the Jew, it seems plain that he must have thoroughly purged out the old leaven before he wrote the prologue of the fourth Gospel. We will, therefore, not hesitate in estimating at its true value the statement of a French critic when he says: "The Alexandrian theology is the synthesis of Judaism and Greek philosophy; and the doctrine of John is, in its turn, the synthesis of the Alexandrian theology with the Christian tradition."¹) The fact is, there is no fusion or synthesis of any kind. As already observed, the only thing in common between Philo and John is the name Logos, which, with the one, denotes *reason*, with the other, Word. The Logos of St. John is not of Alexandrian origin.

Another method of accounting for the origin of the term Logos as a title of Jesus Christ has been to trace it to a Jewish source. Jewish theology, governed by the idea of the unapproachable character of the Deity (cf. the unutterable name יהוה), distinguished between God as inaccessibly removed from the world and as entering into communication with it, between the hidden and the self-revealing God. For this reason, the Jewish doctors, in the Chaldaic paraphrases called Targumim, frequently make use of the phrase *memra Jehovah* (word of the Lord), where the Old Testament simply has God or Lord.²) For instance, when in Gen. 21, 20 it is said, "God was with the lad," the paraphrasts have, "The word of Jehovah was with the lad." Jacob's declaration, "The Lord shall be my God," Gen. 28, 21, is paraphrased into, "The word of Jehovah shall be my God." Instead of, "The Lord was with Joseph," Gen. 39, 21, the Targums have, "The word was with Joseph." While in Ex. 19, 17 it is said that "Moses brought forth the

1) Jean Réville, quoted by Godet, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, vol. I, p. 180.

2) These writings date from the third or fourth century of our era; but they undoubtedly rest upon much more ancient works. Cf. Schürer, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Zeitgeschichte*.

people to meet God," the Jewish theologians say that "Moses brought forth the people to meet the word of Jehovah." God says in Is. 1, 14, "My soul hateth your new moons;" for "my soul" the paraphrase substitutes, "My word." Thus it is seen that this *memra* (word) of Jewish teachers occupies a mediating position between God and the world. The term is employed especially in such passages as ascribe to God human actions and emotions. It was a means of overcoming the strong anthropomorphisms and anthropopathies in which the Old Testament Scriptures abound. This *memra* of the Jews has been said to be the original of the Johannean term *Logos* as applied to Jesus.

But there are several considerations that make this theory altogether improbable, to say the least. Cremer even goes so far as to say that it hardly admits of a doubt that the Apostle John was not even acquainted with the *memra* of the Jewish schools. He is to be classed with the עם הארץ (the illiterate country people), who knew not the law (cf. John 7, 49) and were ignorant of the theological technicalities of the learned scribes.¹⁾ Perhaps this is true. It certainly was true so long as John was a Galilean fisherman. But whether the apostle *remained* ignorant of these things during his entire ministry, whether he was still unacquainted with the *memra* of the Jews when toward the close of his career he wrote the fourth Gospel, is more than improbable. He may have heard and learned many things in regard to Jewish theology during his long life. The necessity of defending the truth over against Jewish adversaries would naturally lead him to acquire some knowledge as to the manner in which the representatives of Jewish learning dealt with the Old Testament.

Nevertheless we cannot believe that John, even though acquainted with the corresponding Jewish term, adopted the notion of the *Logos* from this source. In the first place,

1) *Bibl. theol. Wörterbuch*, siebente Aufl., p. 570.

as Cremer says, the constant interpretation of Jewish terminologies in the Gospel of John is unfavorable to the notion that the readers were acquainted with Jewish theology.¹⁾ Besides, John manifests throughout the entire Gospel that between him (though himself of Jewish extraction) and the Jews the last tie of fellowship has been severed. "The Jews" (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι), so often mentioned in his Gospel, are strangers and foreigners to him. They represent the people who, through their authorities and in the majority of their members, had rejected the Messiah. Through their persistent unbelief and diabolical perverseness they have forfeited the favor of God and become "the synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 3, 9). It would, therefore, be entirely incongruous, if John had conferred upon this people the distinguished honor of borrowing from the phraseology of their schools a name which he employs as the most exalted and adequate title of Jesus the Messiah. And then again, the *memra* of the Jews is nothing more than the product of theological reflection ("ein Theologumenon," Cremer), just as that of Philo is the result of philosophic reflection. It is a device invented in order to render the notion of revelation conceivable to Jewish thought. But of such an idea there is nowhere a trace in the prologue of John.

If, therefore, we are obliged to reject not only the theory of the Alexandrian, but also that of the Jewish origin of the term Logos, the question as to the derivation of this conception comes back to us with increased force. What, then, is the origin of this peculiar name? Has it no antecedents or presuppositions anywhere, or is it to be regarded as an entirely isolated designation? Who could fail to notice that in the ἐν ἀρχῇ, the first word of our prologue, we have a reproduction of the *bereschith*, the first word of Genesis? Hence also the Logos of this prologue evidently points back to the *vayomer* (and God said) of Gen. 1. The creative

1) Ibid.

activity of God is, according to Mosaic record, mediated through His word. And John in his Gospel accentuates the fact that He by whom the world was made is also its Redeemer.

The quasi-personality ascribed in many passages of the Old Testament to the word of God as the principle of His action points in the same direction. According to Is. 55, 11, God says, "My word shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." In Ps. 107, 20 it is said, "He sent His word, and healeth them." But if it should be stoutly insisted on that the passages referred to are purely poetic, and hence irrelevant to the question under discussion, we now introduce a being who cannot be resolved into a poetic fancy, and that is the *Malakh Jehovah*, or the Angel of the Lord. The *Malakh Jehovah* cannot, without an unwarranted thumbscrew exegesis, be reduced to the level of a creature angel. In Ex. 23, 21 God says of the Angel, "Beware of Him, . . . for He will not pardon your transgressions: for *my name* is in Him." Ordinary angels may be "ministering spirits," but they are not, and cannot be, the reflection of the essence of Jehovah. But this is what the expression, "My name is in Him," implies. Here, then, we have a real person with a divine character, a being in whom God manifests His name, reveals Himself. Isaiah calls this Angel the "Angel of the Presence" or the "Angel of the Face" (ch. 63, 9), *i. e.*, the Angel in whom the face or presence of God is manifest. Compare with this the declaration of Jesus, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father;" or the statement of Paul that the "face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4, 6) is the manifestation of the glory of God. Finally, Malachi, the last of the prophets, as if to obviate all possible misunderstanding, identifies the *Malakh Jehovah* with the Messiah. He says (ch. 3, 1), Suddenly the Lord whom ye seek and the Angel of the Covenant whom ye desire shall "come to His temple; . . . behold, He shall

come, saith the Lord of hosts," a prophecy which was fulfilled with the appearance of Jesus Christ, the incarnation of the Logos.

Nor should we omit in this connection the representation of *Wisdom* in the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs. The words referred to, verses 22—31, have again been explained as a poetic personification of an attribute of God. But there is manifestly something more than poetry, when Wisdom itself is made to say, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. . . . When He prepared the heavens, I was there; . . . when He established the clouds, . . . then I was by Him as one brought up with Him." As has already been remarked, this is more than poetry. A mere attribute of God would hardly be thus personified. Do not these expressions find their echo in the ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν of St. John's prologue?

In the light of the preceding discussion, therefore, there is no cogent reason for leaving the field of revelation in accounting both for the name and doctrine of the Logos. Like everything else in the New Testament, John's teaching as respecting the Logos rests on Old Testament foundations. Nay, it constitutes, beyond question, the strongest and most vital bond uniting the Old Testament with the New. Luthardt, therefore, says, "John would have written just so, even if no Plato or Philo had ever treated of the Logos."

And yet, here a question arises. Why does John alone employ this term? Why not Paul, for instance? May not, after all, some reference to contemporary thought be hidden in the use of the name Logos? According to the traditions of the church, John was long resident at Ephesus, the great reservoir, which received the various streams of philosophic and religious speculation that flowed in from different quarters. In these various systems the idea of an intermediate

being between God and the world played a prominent part. There was the *Oum* of the Hindus, the *Hom* of the Persians, the *Memar* of the Jews, and, particularly, the *Logos* of Greek philosophy and incipient Gnosticism. John, of course, must have heard of this chimerical mediator more than once during his long ministry in Asia Minor. It is probable that, like Paul, who proclaimed to the Athenians the "Unknown God," he often had occasion to speak to his contemporaries of the true Mediator between God and man, the "unknown Logos," about whom men were idly speculating. To be sure, this polemical tendency does not directly appear in the prologue; but it must be remembered that the prologue, as well as the entire Gospel, was primarily addressed to Christian believers. Besides, it would mar the surpassing majesty and stately grandeur of these opening verses if they were to descend to explicit apologetics. If such an object lies in the prologue it is subordinate and implicit.

But what John may have said and taught *orally* as regards the Logos—who can tell? He may often have said, to Christians and pagans alike: That connecting link between God and man which men are vainly groping after in the realms of hazy speculation we Christians possess in an historical personality, who, though existing with God before the foundation of the world, assumed flesh and blood in the fullness of time, and laid down His life as a ransom for many, in order that all who believe in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. He is the only, the true Logos of God. This would be so far from being an accommodation to current philosophy that the employment of the same term, but with an entirely different meaning, would be tantamount to a decided protest against the futility and inanity of all such speculations. It would be a kind of divine irony on all the Logos doctrines that had hitherto been spun out of the minds of unchristian thinkers. By applying the term Logos to Jesus Christ, the Crucified,

John said in effect what Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" 1 Cor. 1, 20.

It seems to us, therefore, that John may have been induced, in part, to use this name as the title of Jesus just *because* of the important role played by it in the thought of the time. This would not be the only instance that a Greek word was adopted by the writers of the New Testament and made the vehicle of entirely new truths. Our conclusion, therefore, is that, inspired by God, the Apostle John fixed on the word Logos as a designation of Jesus Christ, not only because the teaching of the Old Testament suggested it as singularly appropriate, but also in order to expose the futility of the Logos theories that had sprung up in the soil of pagan and semi-pagan philosophy.

We shall now turn our attention to the meaning of the title Logos. Logos means word; and if we start out from the simplest and primary meaning of this term, we will understand most readily why Christ has been called the Logos. If man was created in the image of his Maker, we may reasonably look for a certain analogy, no matter how imperfect, between the significance and function of the human word and the divine. The ancients were wont to say, "Speak that I may see thee." The word of man is the organ of his self-revelation. His word, if sincere, is the unveiling of his real self. Through his word he becomes visible, as it were, to his fellow beings. But the word externally expressed presupposes an internal word, a clearly conceived thought, as its foundation. Before the spoken word leaves our lips it must have received a definite objective form in our own minds. Otherwise there would be an inarticulate, meaningless sound, but no intelligible speech. Thus the human word is not only the means of making the self known to others, but even to itself.

And so also—only in an infinitely higher sense—as regards the Logos of God. The Logos is, first of all, with

God (πρὸς τὸν θεόν), an expression denoting not only the personality of the Logos, but also His intimate communion with God. Consequently, the preincarnate Logos has been called the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος (the unuttered word). But this Logos, in whom God knows Himself from eternity, the whole mind and thought of God, has been expressed, according to St. John, not by a voice from heaven or by the tongues of angels, but by appearing in the form and fashion of a man in Jesus of Nazareth. Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. The Logos who was with God before the world was created, who was God from all eternity, assumed a human body and tabernacled among us (ἐσκήνωσεν). Consequently, Christ is the revealer of God *sui generis*. He is the interpreter of the Father's will and counsel not only on specific occasions, like ordinary prophets, but constantly and uninterruptedly. The word did not *come* to Him at sundry times and in diverse manners, but proceeded from Him at all times, as from its original source. It cannot be said of Christ that He was inspired, because in Him dwelt the whole fullness of the godhead bodily. He is thus far removed from those human agents whom God occasionally employed as the *forth-tellers* (προφήτης) of divine truth. He is the revealer of God in an absolute sense. This is the import of the concluding verse of our prologue. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." To the same purport are the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by the Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds." A greater than Moses, Elijah, or Solomon is here.

But if the eternal Logos was made flesh, it further follows that Christ is the true revealer of God also in reference to His *works*. Not only by His teaching does Christ ex-

hibit Himself as the Logos but also by His deeds. He communicated the knowledge of His Father's will to humanity just as surely by what He did or suffered as by what He said. Jesus was just as truly fulfilling His mission as the incarnate Logos when He was suspended on the cross on Calvary as when He said to Nicodemus, "God so loved the world," etc.; just as distinctly when He gave sight to the blind as when He said, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness;" just as plainly when He washed His disciples' feet as when He said, "Blessed are the meek." In short, Jesus Christ as the Logos incarnate is the supreme enunciator of the mind of God to the whole extent of His personality.

Nor is this all. If Christ is the incarnate Logos of God, it follows, as a necessity, that in Him are included in advance all those partial and fragmentary revelations which at sundry times and in diverse manners God had granted to humanity, as well as those given and written subsequent to the incarnation. Christ being the incarnate Logos represents the sum total of what God has to say to humanity. Not only is He in His own person the perfect revealer of God, but He is the sum and substance of all revelation. He is God's absolute Word, not only with respect to what He Himself did or said, but also in reference to what others have said under divine inspiration before and after His appearance in the flesh. Christ, the incarnate Logos, is the focal center of all Scripture. All the scattered rays of divine revelation that at various times have shed their kindly light upon those who sit in darkness find in Him their unifying and luminous center. As all the Roman roads that threaded the vast empire radiated from the "golden pillar" on the forum of the Eternal City, so all the numerous paths of God's disclosures to humankind radiate from Christ as their common beginning. Or, to give a different turn to the figure, Christ is the "golden pillar" at which all the diverse roads of divine revelation converge. Christ, the God-

man, is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning, middle, and end of what the Creator has to say to the world.

We shall conclude with a few observations on the practical import of the sublime truth that Christ is the Logos. If Christ is the Logos, it is vain to attempt to pry into the mystery of the godhead with human reason. All human speculations on the nature of the Deity will either end in fog or something more tangible perhaps—materialism. Philippi, speaking of the folly of trying to comprehend the mystery of the Trinity, and of the still greater folly of denying it for the reason that it is incomprehensible, says: "The outcome of this folly is shown by the history of the newer philosophy. It began with a denial of the Trinity. Thus it lost God the Redeemer and God the Sanctifier, and aimed to retain only God the personal Creator. But also the latter was still too incomprehensible; therefore it advanced farther and conceived of God as the impersonal, eternal, spiritual substratum (Urgrund) of the world, who realizes and reveals Himself in the universe and in the human mind. But also this uniform spiritual substratum of the world was still too mysterious to them [the advocates of this wisdom]; so, finally, they canceled Him also, until they had nothing left but force and matter, materialism and atheism."¹⁾

If Christ is the Logos by whom the world was made, all such things as naturalistic development, the fortuitous concourse of atoms, blind chance, or fatal necessity are once for all branded as lies. If Christ is the Logos, there is no room for development in the sphere of Christian doctrine. The final and absolute truth has already been revealed and deposited in the Scriptures, and all progress must be limited to a better understanding of what has thus been laid down. Once more, if Christ is the Logos, all religious syncretism aiming to obliterate the sharp line of demarcation between

1) *Der Eingang des Johannesevangeliums, in Meditationen ausgelegt*, p. 48.

the religion of Christ and other systems is an impious folly. To place Christ the Logos on the same, or nearly the same, level as the founders of pagan systems, to put Him in one company with Buddha, or Confucius, or Mahomet, and "other masters," is to offer Him as great an indignity as did Alexander Severus, the Roman emperor, who placed the statue of Christ among his household deities. If Christ is the Logos, the only Mediator between God and man, Unitarianism, Judaism, bald Deism, and the popular notion that a vague belief in the existence of a "Supreme Being" somewhere above the clouds constitutes Christianity, are so many delusions of men, who out of carnal presumption or ignorance would scale the battlements of heaven instead of passing in through the divinely-appointed door. To endeavor to enter into communion with the Father except by the mediation of the incarnate Logos is the very acme of godless folly and impotent pride. Finally, if Christ is the Logos, only two alternatives are placed before the children of men — accept and live, or, reject and perish.

C. GAENSSLE.

PATRICK HAMILTON,

The First Lutheran Preacher and Martyr of Scotland.

By WILLIAM DALLMANN.*

Patrick Hamilton was born near Glasgow, about 1504. His father was Sir Patrick Hamilton, son of Lord of Hamilton and Princess Mary, daughter of King James II of Scotland. Sir Patrick was the first of Scottish knights when Scottish chivalry was in the height of its glory. The mother of our hero was Catherine Stewart, daughter of the Duke of

* *Authorities:* — Prof. Peter Lorimer's *Patrick Hamilton*; John Knox, *Hist. Ref. in Scotland*; John Spotswood, *Hist. Church in Scotland*; John Cunningham, *Church Hist. of Scotland*; D'Aubigné, *Ref. in Scotland*; *The Baird Lectures* for 1899; *Dictionary of National Biography*; *Real-encyklopaedie fuer prot. Theol. u. Kirche*.

Albany, second son of King James II. So, then, Hamilton was of royal blood, both on his father's and on his mother's side. One uncle was the Duke of Albany, a prince of the blood, Regent of the realm during the minority of James V, another was the first Earl of Arran, one of the most powerful nobles in the kingdom.

Brought up among relatives of rank and refinement, of manly virtues and scholarly accomplishments, it is no wonder the first Reformer of Scotland became distinguished for high breeding and courtesy and for an intense love of all humane and liberal studies. With divine grace added to the gifts of noble birth and careful education, he became the most zealous and most courteous of evangelists; a confessor of the truth mild and modest in manners, firm in spirit and principles; a martyr learned and cultivated as well as fervent and devoted.

When Hamilton was only fourteen years old, the influence of his powerful family made him Abbot of Ferne, in 1517, and the revenues gave him means to study abroad. He entered the College of Montaigu in Paris, where John Major, the great Scottish light, was teaching at the time, and in 1520 he became a Master of Arts.

During Hamilton's residence on the banks of the Seine, "an impulse was propagated to the University from a soul immensely more potent and world-subduing than the polished and timid scholar of Rotterdam. In 1519 the strong hand of Luther knocked violently at its gates, and the sound went through all its studious halls and cloisters," says Lorimer.

"In that year a great many copies were brought to Paris of the Leipzig Disputation between Luther and Eck; twenty of which Magister John Nicolas, quaestor of the Gallic nation, purchased on the 20th of January, by appointment of the nation, for the use of those who were deputed by the university to examine the book, and of any others who might wish to report their opinion thereon to

the university," says Bulaeus in *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis*. All Europe waited anxiously for the decision. The issue was doubtful, for Lutheran votes were not wanting even in the Sorbonne. At length the champions of the old darkness prevailed over the friends of the new light. The university solemnly decreed, on the 15th of April, 1521, in the presence of students from every country in Christendom, that Luther was a heretic, and that his work should be publicly thrown into the flames.

In a few months there arrived in Paris "A Defense of Martin Luther against the Purbund Decree of the Parisian Theologasters" from the pen of young Philip Melancthon of Wittenberg, as pungent as it was polished, and as contemptuous as it was elegant, and it made an immense sensation.

From Paris Hamilton went to the University of Louvain, in Holland, most likely to study under Erasmus. On June 9, 1523, he became a member of the University of St. Andrews, in Scotland; on October 3, 1524, he was admitted in the Faculty of Arts. St. Andrews was the seat of the Primate of the Scotch church, the ecclesiastical and literary capital of the kingdom, the Vatican of Scotland. There Hamilton composed a mass, arranged in parts for nine voices, in honor of the angels. It was sung in the Cathedral, Hamilton himself acting as the leader of the choir. Though an abbot, Hamilton never wore the dress of a monk.

At the end of 1524, books of Luther were brought into Scotland and created a sensation, as they did everywhere. Gavin Dunbar, the old bishop of Aberdeen, was the first to find it out, discovering one day a volume of Luther in his own town. He was in consternation when he saw that the fiery darts hurled by the heretic of Germany were crossing into Scotland. As like discoveries were made in St. Andrews, Louthgow, and other places, the affair was brought before Parliament.

On July 17, 1525, when James V was fourteen years old and managing affairs himself, the clergy procured the passing of the following act: "Forasmuch as the damnable opinions of heresy are spread in divers countries by the heretic Luther and his disciples, . . . therefore, that no manner of person, stranger, that happens to arrive with the ships within any part of this realm, bring with them any books or works of said Luther's, his disciples or servants—dispute or rehearse his heresies or opinions, unless it be to the confusion thereof, under pain of escheating of their ships and goods, and putting of their persons in prison. And that this act be published and proclaimed throughout this realm at all ports and burghs of the same, so that they may allege no ignorance thereof."

In August of the same year another act states that "sundry strangers and others within the diocese of Aberdeen have books of that heretic Luther, and favor his errors and false opinions, in contravention of our Act of Parliament lately made in our last parliament," and asks, "that you confiscate their goods."

In a short time the number of Lutherans became so alarming that in 1527 an additional clause provided for the punishment of Scotch Lutherans the same as foreigners. Luther was at length at the gates of the National Church. Luther's books and opinions—those arrows of the mighty—had already found their way into not a few Scottish hearts and homes. As early as 1525 traders from Leith, Dundee, and Montrose purchased Tyndale's English New Testament, "recently invented by Martin Luther," as some monks declared, in the marts of Flanders and Holland and sold them in Edinburgh, and mostly in St. Andrews. All that was wanting now was the voice of the living preacher. The first that God prepared and produced was Patrick Hamilton. In 1526 Hamilton began to declare openly his new convictions, in the cathedral and elsewhere, and soon the report of his heresy was carried to the ears of the Archbishop.

In 1527 Beaton "made faithful inquisition during Lent" and found that Hamilton was "infamed with heresy, disputing, holding and maintaining divers heresies of Martin Luther and his followers, repugnant to the faith;" whereupon he proceeded to "decern him" to be formally summoned and accused.

Hamilton was not ready just yet for the crown of martyrdom, and so he went to Germany, in April, 1527, accompanied by John Hamilton of Linlithgow and Gilbert Wynram of Edinburgh. "He passed to the schools in Germany, for then the fame of Wittenberg was greatly divulged in all countries; where, by God's providence, he became familiar with those lights and notable servants of Jesus Christ at that time, Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, and Francis Lambert," says Knox. According to Lorimer, at Wittenberg the young Scotch abbot found the monasteries deserted, and Luther, once a monk, living happily in a few rooms of the empty Augustinian cloister, with his new-married wife, a converted and fugitive nun, Catharina von Bora. He saw the churches of the city purged of the old superstitions. He heard the Gospel hymns of Luther sung in loud and fervent chorus by crowded congregations. He saw the excellent pastor, John Bugenhagen—Pomeranus—standing in the pulpit of the ancient parish church, and preaching the word of life to the zealous burghers. He listened with admiration to the eloquence of Luther, poured forth upon select congregations of courtiers and academics from the pulpit of the Castle Church. In both churches he saw the sacrament of the Lord's body and blood administered to the communicants in both kinds. Luther's New Testament was read everywhere. The little city was crowded to inconvenience with the multitude of students who flocked from all parts of Europe to sit at the feet of Luther and Melanchthon.

When the pest broke out in Wittenberg, the Scots went to the banks of the Lahn, where Philip of Hessen opened

the new University of Marburg, May 30, 1527, and they enrolled their names in the new album among the hundred and four "*cives*" of the academic body; they were number 37, 38, and 39. The head of the theological faculty was Francis Lambert of Avignon, who was the first French monk to be converted by Luther's writings. He studied over a year under Luther at Wittenberg and later drew up the program of the Hessian reformation in his so-called "Paradoxes," the first of which is: "All that is *deformed* ought to be *reformed*. The Word of God *alone* teaches us what ought to be so, and all reform effected otherwise is vain." Lambert says of Hamilton: "His learning was of no common kind for his years, and his judgment in divine truth was eminently clear and solid. His object in visiting the University was to confirm himself more abundantly in the truth; and I can truly say that I have seldom met with anyone who conversed on the Word of God with greater spirituality and earnestness of feeling."

In 1525 Tyndale had printed the first two editions of his New Testament at Worms, and, to elude the pursuit of Cardinal Wolsey's agents, came to Marburg in 1527, and these two martyrs for a time lived and labored together in the far-away German city. "Hamilton was the first man after the erection of the University who put forth a series of theses to be publicly defended. These theses were conceived in the most evangelical spirit, and were maintained with the greatest learning. It was by my advice that he published them," says Lambert. From them it is clear that Hamilton was a close student of Luther, especially of his "Freedom of a Christian Man," published in 1520. They are the earliest doctrinal production of the Scottish Reformation, and they prove with primary authority that the beginning of that Reformation was Lutheran. They were translated by John Frith, the English martyr, and embodied by John Knox in his *History of the Reformation*, and by Fox in his *Acts and Monuments*, "and so became a corner-

stone of protestant theology both in Scotland and England." They are known as Patrick's "Places," or Common Places, likely from Melanchthon's *Loci Communes*. Some of these "Places" follow:—

"The law showeth us our sin, the Gospel showeth us remedy for it. The law showeth us our condemnation, the Gospel showeth us our redemption. The law is the word of ire, the Gospel is the word of grace. The law is the word of despair, the Gospel is the word of comfort. The law saith to the sinner, Pay thy debt; the Gospel saith, Christ hath paid it. The law saith, thou art a sinner, despair, thou shalt be damned; the Gospel saith, Thy sins are forgiven thee, be of good comfort, thou shalt be saved. The law saith, The Father of heaven is angry with thee; the Gospel saith, Christ hath pacified Him with His blood. The law saith, Where is thy righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction? The Gospel saith, Christ is thy righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction. The law saith, Thou art bound and obliged to me, to the devil, and to hell; the Gospel saith, Christ hath delivered thee from them all.

"The faith of Christ is to believe in Him, that is, to believe His word, and believe that He will help thee in all thy need, and deliver thee from all evil. Thou wilt ask me, What word? I answer, The Gospel. He that believeth not the Gospel believeth not God; he that believeth the Gospel shall be safe. He that hath faith is just and good. All that is done in faith pleaseth God. He that lacketh faith cannot please God; he that hath faith and believeth in God cannot displease Him. Faith is the gift of God, it is not in our own power. Faith is the root of all good, incredulity is the root of all evil. Faith maketh God and man good friends, incredulity maketh them foes. Faith only maketh a man good and righteous, incredulity only maketh him unjust and evil. Faith holdeth stiff by the word of God, incredulity wavereth here and there. Faith loveth both God and his neighbor, incredulity loveth neither of

them. Faith only saveth us, incredulity only condemneth us. Faith cometh of the word of God; hope cometh by faith; and charity springeth of them both. Faith believeth the word; hope trusteth after that which is promised by the word; charity doeth good unto her neighbor through the love that she hath to God, and gladness that is within herself. Faith looketh to God and His word; hope looketh unto His gift and reward; charity looketh on her neighbor's profit. Faith receiveth God; hope receiveth His reward; charity loveth her neighbors with a glad heart, without any respect of reward.

“Whosoever believeth or thinketh to be saved by his works, denieth that Christ is his Savior, that Christ died for him, and that all things pertain to Christ. For how is He thy Savior if thou mightest save thyself by thy works, or whereto should He die for thee if any works might have saved thee? What is this, to say Christ died for thee? Verily, that thou shouldest have died eternally, and Christ, to deliver thee from death, died for thee, and changed thy eternal death into His own death; for thou madest the fault and He suffered the punishment, and that for the love He had to thee before thou wast born, when thou hadst done neither good nor evil. Now, seeing He hath paid thy debt, thou needest not, neither canst thou, pay it, but shouldest be damned if His blood were not. But since He was punished for thee, thou shalt not be punished. Finally, He hath delivered thee from thy condemnation and from all evil, and desireth naught of thee but that thou wilt acknowledge what He hath done for thee, and bear it in mind, and that thou wouldest help others for His sake both in word and deed, even as He hath holpen thee for naught and without reward. Oh! how ready would we be to help others if we knew His goodness and gentleness toward us. He is a good and a gentle Lord, for He doth all for naught. Let us, I beseech you, therefore follow His footsteps whom all the world ought to praise and worship. Amen.”

Having read Luther, Hamilton became a Lutheran in doctrine; having seen and talked with Luther, and lived for a time in the element which the great Reformer spread around him, Hamilton became a Lutheran in spirit as well as in doctrine. The sight of Luther's firm courage and constancy gave new strength to the young Scot, and he could not long admire such a shining example of heroism of faith without himself being converted into an evangelical hero.

After six months in Lutheran Germany, Hamilton, in the autumn of 1527, returned to Scotland, ready to die for the Gospel. He preached to his relatives at Kincavel, and also in all the country round, even in beautiful St. Michael's at Linlithgow, the Versailles of Scotland. In consequence of his preaching the monks of Kelso complained of "these evil times, in the increase of Lutheranism," and the Canons of Holyrood bewailed "these wretched Lutheran times."

Soon after his return to Scotland, Hamilton married a young lady of noble rank, and a daughter, named Issobel, was born to them. He gives as his reason for marriage his hatred of the hypocrisy of the Roman Church; he seems to have felt on the occasion very much as Luther did in similar circumstances: he wished to show, by deed as well as word, how entirely he had cast off the usurped and oppressive tyranny of Rome.

A Lutheran missionary, with royal blood in his veins, and all the power of the Hamiltons at his back, was a most dangerous heretic in Scotland. The moment was critical; no time must be lost; Archbishop Beaton must bestir himself. The Primate desired a conference with Hamilton at St. Andrews on the condition of the Church. Before he went, Hamilton told his relatives that he had not long to live. But as Luther went to Worms in spite of dangers to confess his faith, so Hamilton went to St. Andrews in spite of dangers to confess his faith. He arrived about the middle of January, 1528, and had several private conferences with

the Primate and his coadjutors; he also for nearly a month taught openly in the university on all points of doctrine and administration needing a change.

Canon Alexander Alane had publicly refuted the arch-heretic Luther himself, not only to his own satisfaction, but to the satisfaction of all the theologians of St. Andrews. He now wished to bring back to the Church the misguided Hamilton. But the young Lutheran divine proved more than a match for the learned Canon and sent him away to his study shaken in his old faith. He became Hamilton's fervent admirer and attached disciple and the first historian of his teaching, trial, and martyrdom. We shall hear more of him later on.

Alexander Campbell, prior of the Dominicans, also often talked with Hamilton and acknowledged the truth of his words. "Yes, the Church is in need of reformation in many ways," the prior said. But later he betrayed and accused Hamilton.

When Beaton and his advisers felt it safe to throw off the mask, they issued a summons to Hamilton requiring him to appear before the Primate on a certain day, to answer to the charge of holding and teaching divers heresies. Hamilton's friends begged him to flee. But he said, "He had come thither to confirm the minds of the godly by his death as a martyr to the truth; and to turn his back now would be to lay a stumbling-block in their path, and to cause some of them to fall." Sir James Hamilton, the Reformer's brother, made use of all his resources as a baron, a sheriff, and a captain of one of the king's castles, to assemble a strong force to rescue his brother from the death planned by the clergy. But a continued storm in the Firth hindered him from reaching St. Andrews in time. John Andrew Duncan, Laird of Airdie, who had fought on Flodden Field, armed his tenants and servants to save Hamilton, but the Archbishop's horsemen took him a prisoner and he had to go into exile. Appeal had been made

to the powerful Earl of Angus and to the King, but the advice was coldly given "that the Reformer make his peace with the Church."

From the moment Hamilton received the summons to appear before the Primate and his council, he redoubled his exertions as an evangelist and confined himself to the most important points in which the Papacy had departed from the Bible. "Being not only forward in knowledge, but also ardent in spirit, not tarrying for the hour appointed, he prevented the time, and came very early in the morning before he was looked for," says Fox.

Hamilton's thirteen articles of faith were referred to a Council of Theologians. Seven of these articles treat of the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith, the other six treat of purgatory, auricular confession, etc.; one declares the pope to be the Antichrist. In a few days the Council judged all the articles to be heretical. This judgment was to be presented at a solemn meeting of the highest dignitaries of the church in the cathedral on the last day of February, 1528.

The captain of the castle with an armed band arrested Hamilton. Everything was now ready for the last act of the tragedy. On the appointed day the people crowded to the cathedral at an early hour, and the Primate passed from the castle with a long train of bishops, abbots, priors, and doctors and took his seat on the chief bench of the tribunal of heresy. Friar Campbell read the articles with a loud voice and charged them one by one upon the prisoner and argued that the articles were heretical; but Hamilton gently and ably defended himself. At length the Dominican was silenced, and he turned to the tribunal for fresh instructions. The bishops told him to stop arguing, to call the Reformer heretic to his face, and to justify the opprobrium by overwhelming him with new accusations.

"Heretick!" Campbell exclaimed, turning again to Hamilton.

"Nay, brother," the Reformer mildly interrupted, "you do not think me heretick."

"Heretick! thou saidst it was lawful to all men to read the Word of God, and especially the New Testament."

"I wot not if I said so; but I say now it *is* reason and lawful to all men that have souls to read the Word of God, and that they are able to understand the same, and in particular the latter will and testament of Christ Jesus, whereby they may acknowledge their sins and repent of the same, and amend their lives by faith and repentance, and come to the mercy of God by Christ Jesus."

"Now, heretick, I see that thou affirmest the words of thy accusation."

"I affirm nothing but the word which I have spoken in the presence of this auditory."

"Now, farther, thou sayest it is not lawful to worship imagery."

"I say no more than what God spake to Moses in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, in the Second Commandment, 'Thou shalt not make any graven image; thou shalt not bow down to them to worship them.'"

"Heretick, knowest thou not that imagery is the books of the laic and common people, to put them in remembrance of the holy saints that wrought for their salvation?"

"Brother! it ought to be the preaching of the true Word of God that should put the people in remembrance of the blood of Christ and their salvation."

"Heretick! thou sayest it is but lost labor to pray to or call upon saints, and in particular on the blessed Virgin Mary, or John, James, Peter, or Paul, as mediators to God for us."

"I say with Paul, 'There is no mediator betwixt God and man, but Christ Jesus His Son;' and whatsoever they be who call or pray to any saint departed, they spoil Christ Jesus of His office."

“Heretick! thou sayest it is all in vain our labors made for them that are departed, when we sing soul-masses, psalms, and dirigies, which are the relaxation of the souls that are departed, who are continued in the pains of purgatory.”

“Brother! I have read in the Scripture of God of no such a place as purgatory; nor yet believe I that there is anything that may purge the souls of men but the blood of Christ Jesus, which ransom standeth in no earthly thing, nor in soul-mass nor dirigie, nor in gold nor silver, but only by repentance of sins, and faith in the blood of Christ Jesus.”

Turning round to the tribunal, the Prior said: “My Lord Archbishop, you hear he denies the institutions of holy kirk, and the authority of our holy father the Pope. I need not to accuse him any more.”

Such was Patrick Hamilton’s noble confession in the face of that hostile tribunal and large assembly. He spoke out the truth of God and disguised nothing, though well aware what his plain speech would cost him.

One of his judges was the Earl of Cassilis, only thirteen years old; another was Patrick Hepburn, a Prior of monks, who had eleven illegitimate children and boasted of his adulteries; later he became Bishop of Moray; another was the abbot David Beaton, who had at least seven illegitimate children; later he became a Cardinal and spent his nights with prostitutes and his days in burning people for reading the Bible.

The Primate, with unanimous consent of his assessors, then solemnly pronounced sentence:—“... We have found the same Magister Patrick many ways infamed with heresy, disputing, holding, and maintaining divers heresies of Martin Luther and his followers. . . . We have found also that he hath affirmed, published, and taught divers opinions of Luther and wicked heresies after that he was summoned to appear before us and our council . . . and therefore do judge

and pronounce him to be delivered over to the secular power to be punished, and his goods to be confiscate." — The tribunal instantly rose, and Hamilton was led back to prison under a guard several thousand strong. The executioners at once prepared the stake at which he was to be burned, in front of the gate of St. Salvator's College.

Followed by his servant and a few intimate friends, Hamilton at noon accompanied the captain with a quick step to the place of burning, carrying in his right hand a copy of the four Gospels. He uncovered his head, and, lifting up his eyes to heaven, addressed himself in silent prayer to Him who alone could give him a martyr's strength and victory. The book he gave to one of his friends; taking off his cap and gown and other upper garments, he gave them to his servant, with the words, "This will not profit in the fire; they will profit thee. After this, of me thou canst receive no commodity, except the example of my death, which I pray thee bear in mind. For albeit it be bitter to the flesh, and fearful before man, yet is it the entrance to eternal life, which none shall possess that denies Christ Jesus before this wicked generation."

The officials of the Archbishop offered him his life if he would recant his confession in the Cathedral. "As to my confession, I will not deny it for awe of your fire, for my confession and belief is in Christ Jesus. Therefore I will not deny it; and I will rather be content that my body burn in this fire for confession of my faith in Christ, than my soul should burn in the fire of hell for denying the same. But as to the sentence pronounced against me this day by the bishops and doctors, I here, in the presence of you all, appeal contrary the said sentence and judgment given against me, and take me to the mercy of God."

Says Pitscottie, "The servant of God entered in contemplation and prayer to almighty God to be merciful to the people who persecuted him, for there were many of them blinded in ignorance, that they knew not what they did.

He also besought Christ Jesus to be Mediator for him to the Father, and that He would strengthen him with His Holy Spirit, that he might steadfastly abide the cruel pains and flames of fire prepared for him."

The martyr was bound to the stake with an iron chain. Fire was now laid to the pile of wood and coals, and it exploded some powder placed among the fagots. The martyr's left hand and left cheek were scorched by the explosion. Though thrice kindled, the flames took no steady hold of the pile. "Have you no dry wood?" demanded the sufferer. "Have you no more gunpowder?" It took some time to fetch more wood and powder, and the martyr suffered acutely. Nevertheless "he uttered divers comfortable speeches to the bystanders," and addressed himself calmly to more than one of the friars, who molested him with their cries, bidding him convert and pray to the Virgin Mary. To one he said with a smile: "You are late with your advice, when you see me on the point of being consumed in the flames. If I had chosen to recant I need not have been here. But I pray you come forward and testify the truth of *your* religion by putting your little finger into this fire in which I am burning with my whole body." Friar Campbell, his betrayer and accuser, was foremost among the tormentors. To him Hamilton at last said: "Wicked man! thou knowest it is the truth of God for which I now suffer. So much thou didst confess to me in private, and thereupon I appeal thee to answer before the judgment-seat of Christ."

Surrounded and devoured by fierce flames, he still remembered his widowed mother and commended her to the care of his friends, as Christ on the cross commended His mother to John. When he was nearly burned through the middle by the fiery chain, some one wished a last sign if he still had faith in the doctrine for which he was dying. He raised three fingers of his half-consumed hand, and held them up steadily till he died. His last words were: "How long, Lord, shall darkness overwhelm this kingdom? How

long wilt Thou suffer this tyranny of men? Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

The execution lasted for nearly six hours, it being about six o'clock before his body was quite reduced to ashes. Hamilton was only twenty-four years old when he suffered death for his Lutheran faith.

The doctors of Louvain with cruel joy thanked Beaton for his services to the faith and congratulated, almost with envy, the University of St. Andrews upon the honors it had earned by such an edifying display of Catholic zeal. "Believe not that this example shall have place only among you, for there shall be those among externe nations which shall imitate the same."

At Marburg the grief of the Reformers was equaled only by their admiration. Addressing the Landgrave of Hessen soon after, Lambert exclaimed:—"He came to your university out of Scotland, that remote corner of the world; and he returned to his country again to become its first and now illustrious apostle. He was all on fire with zeal to confess the name of Christ, and he has offered himself to God as a holy, living sacrifice. He brought into the Church of God not only all the splendor of his station and gifts, but his life itself. Such is the flower of surpassing sweetness, yea, the ripe fruit, which your university has produced in its very commencement. You have not been disappointed in your wishes. You founded this school with the desire that from it might go forth intrepid confessors of Christ, and steadfast assertors of His truth. See, you have one such already, an example in many ways illustrious. Others, if the Lord will, will follow soon." They did.

Hamilton's youth, his noble blood, his recent marriage, and his unflinching courage moved the hearts of the spectators: "the smoke of Patrick Hamilton infected all it blew on." "The faith for which Hamilton died shall be our faith," the people said.

It was the distinguishing mark of Hamilton that he represented in Scotland the Lutheran Reformation, not the earlier Wiclifite or the later Calvinistic. As a result of the Gospel preaching, the Scottish nation was born again. Hamilton's doctrine lived after him and wrought with a heaven-like virtue in the nation's heart till it leavened the whole lump. "Instead of the thorn came up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier came up the myrtle-tree."

The skippers of Leith were diligent importers of Lutheran books and English New Testaments; and it was by the frequent reading and hearing of these writings that the people, often coming together under cover of night, were able to increase their knowledge of divine truth, and to cherish and confirm their new and better faith.

Henry Forrest, a young Benedictine monk of Linlithgow, called Hamilton a martyr and read the New Testament. The Primate said, "We must burn him in order to terrify the others." To the north of St. Andrews, in Forfar and Angus, many people loved the New Testament which was come from Germany. There still exists in that district a village named Luthermoor, and Luther's Bridge, and Luther's Mill, and Luther's torrent, which falls into the North Esk. There Henry Forrest, Scotland's second martyr, was burned for his Lutheran faith.

Alexander Stratoun, Laird of Lauriston, read the New Testament in English to his relative David Stratoun, who was the first layman to be burned for his faith, August 27, 1534, on Calton Hill, Edinburgh.

Kennedy, a young man of Ayr, not yet eighteen, "of an excellent ingyne in Scottish poesy," was arrested for heresy in 1539, and with Jerome Russel was burned.

John Erskine, the young Baron of Dun, was the first man to introduce Greek into the schools of Scotland; and for teaching his scholars the Greek New Testament in Erskine's school at Montrose, George Wishart was accused of heresy and exiled; later he was burned to death.

Robert Richardson of St. Andrews became a Lutheran preacher soon after 1530 in England under Thomas Cromwell, Prime Minister to Henry VIII.

In 1532 "there was ane greit objuration of the favouraris of Mertene Lutar in the Abbay of Halyrudhous;" of course all their property was taken by the king. Two years later in the same place sixteen were convicted, and they lost all their goods to the King.

Norman Gourlay was burned for marrying a wife. "But if he had used ten thousand whores he had not been burnt," grimly remarks Pitscottie in his history.

Andrew Chartres of Dundee, a Carthusian, had to flee to England in 1538, and then studied a year in Wittenberg.

John M'Alpine, Prior of the Monastery of Perth, of an ancient and respectable family of the famous clan Alpine, in 1534 had attained to the distinction of being a known and dreaded Lutheran. He had to flee for his life to England; in 1540 he went to Wittenberg and became a friend of Luther and Melanchthon. Upon their recommendation he was made professor of theology in the University of Copenhagen in Denmark and was one of the translators of the Bible into Danish.

John M'Dowel, sub-prior of the Black Friars of Glasgow, a member of the University of Glasgow, "a man of singular prudence, besides his learning and godliness," became a Lutheran and had to flee from Scotland about 1537 to England and about 1540 to Germany where he was elected "Burgermeister" of a city.

Soon after Hamilton's death, Gavyn Logie, principal regent of St. Leonard's College, a man of high standing in the University of St. Andrews, went over to Lutheranism and spread the doctrine among his students till he was exiled in 1534. One of his students, John Fyfe, or Joannes Faithus, studied at Wittenberg in 1539. Melanchthon called him Joannes Fidelis and recommended him as professor of theology at Frankfort in 1547. David Lyne, a Franciscan,

was driven away about 1538 and at Wittenberg won the heart of Melanchthon by his piety and learning, and in a letter of August, 1556, the Preceptor of Germany recommends him to John Faith, the Scotch Lutheran professor at Frankfurt. In Dundee the three Wedderburns excelled in "gude and godly ballads," largely translations of Luther's hymns, and these were sung by the earliest Scottish reformers to the praise of God, according to the original Lutheran melodies.

No fewer than nine Black Friars of St. Dominic endured exile or death from 1528 to 1544. The first of these to preach the Gospel was Alexander Seyton, confessor of the young King James V. He spoke plainly in the confessional to the immoral king and in the pulpit against immoral bishops. Of course he had to flee for his life. He became chaplain of the Duke of Suffolk in England and was succeeded by John Willock, another Scotch exile.

Canon Alexander Alane, whom we already know, spoke his mind regarding the cruelty displayed in Hamilton's death. Archbishop Beaton and Prior Hepburn laid a trap for him by appointing him preacher before the provincial synod of clergy in St. Andrews in 1529. He preached on the duty of the clergy to feed the flock and to set a good example. The Archbishop smelled a taint of Lutheranism in the canon's officious zeal for morality, and it gave mortal offense to Hepburn, who felt personally condemned for his notorious adulteries. Hepburn put Alane into a filthy dungeon for months and kicked him on the head, almost killing him. The king interposed, but without effect. Seeing that nothing short of Alane's death would satisfy the Prior, the canon's friends helped him to escape on the ship of a German, ready to sail, 1532. He saw two young Lutherans burned in Cologne, and in 1533 came to Wittenberg, where Melanchthon changed his name to Alesius, *i. e.*, the Wanderer, and from that time he was known as Alexander Alesius. At Wittenberg he printed two eloquent epistles pleading

with the king of Scots to permit the reading of the Bible in the mother tongue. Cochlaeus stoutly asserts that these letters were written by Melanchthon, "that Coryphaeus of heresy, that architect of lies." No doubt Melanchthon revised these letters, as he did the works of many others. Here Alesius became a Lutheran and signed the Augsburg Confession. John Stigelius "pursued him with an elegy" when Alesius, in 1535, was sent by Melanchthon with a present of books to Cranmer and Henry VIII of England. The king made him a teacher of theology at Cambridge, but he was too Lutheran, and he left to practice medicine in London. In 1537 Thomas Cromwell used him to dispute against the Catholics "Of the Auctorite of the Word of God concerning the number of the Sacraments;" it was dedicated to John Frederick of Saxony. In 1540 Elector Joachim II of Brandenburg made him professor of theology at Frankfurt. In 1543 he refused a call of Duke Albrecht of Prussia to the new University of Koenigsberg. He went to Leipzig as professor of theology, and when the news came to Melanchthon at Bonn that the Scotch Parliament had permitted the Bible to everyone, he wrote to Camerarius his fears that the Scotchman would be off again to Scotland on the wings of Daedalus. But Alesius stayed in Leipzig; in 1555 and 1561 he was even chosen Rector of the University. Full of honors, he died March 17, 1565.

The Dominican Monastery of Stirling had the signal distinction of giving no fewer than three martyrs to the cause of the Reformation. One of these, John Rough, was "the first man from whom John Knox received any taste of the truth," and in him the religious life, which received its first impulse from Patrick Hamilton, linked itself on to the work of John Knox.

Soon after Hamilton's death, Sir James Scrymgeour of Dudhope, Constable of Dundee, and hereditary Standard-bearer of the kingdom, stood forward as a fearless defender of oppressed Lutherans that he frankly told the mitred Prior

Patrick Hepburn how gladly he would have disappointed the cleric's persecuting zeal and cruel designs. This was an important accession to the cause of the Reformation since Sir James was connected with powerful families, and these became associated with the Reformation.

John Andrew Duncan, Laird of Airdie, who had tried to rescue Hamilton, became a Lutheran and greatly influenced the old families of Fife and Perthshire, where Paul Craw, the Bohemian Hussite, and James Resby, the English Wiclifite, had been burned for preaching the Gospel.

Henry Balnaves studied at Cologne, and, of course, became acquainted with the Lutheran Reformation. In 1543 he was appointed Secretary of State and Keeper of all the Seals of our Lady the Queen. At this time he was already a Reformer of long standing and very useful to the cause. In 1538 he was marked out for vengeance and escaped only by the sudden death of Thomas Scott, the instigator of the plot to kill him.

Sir David Lindsay, the great poet-reformer of Scotland, was roused when the alarm of the advent of Lutheranism and the voice of Hamilton's martyr testimony rang loud through the land. His "Dreme," and "Complaint," and "Testament and Complaint," 1530, and "The Three Estates," 1535, rendered immense services to the Reformation.

George Buchanan, tutor of one of the King's sons, in his "Somnium," "Palinodia," and "Franciscanus," pungent and powerful satires in purest Latin, was a vast help to the Reformation. Even the king could not shield him from the vengeance of his clerical enemies, and he had to flee to England.

Sir James Hamilton, Patrick's elder brother, was excommunicated and banished, and his lands and goods confiscated to the crown. His sister Katherine appeared before the tribunal in the Church of Holyrood, and pleaded her own cause with great spirit and courage. "Being questioned on the point of justification by works, she answered

simply that she believed no person could be saved by his works. Master John Spence, the lawyer, held a long discourse with her about that purpose, telling her that there were divers sorts of works—works of congruity, and works of condignity; in the application whereof he consumed a long time. The young woman growing thereupon into a chafe, cried out, 'Work here, work there, what kind of working is all this? I know perfectly that no works can save me but the works of Christ, my Savior!' The king was sitting on the bench and laughed heartily at her answer; yet, taking the gentlewoman aside, he moved her to recant her opinions. She granted to his princely entreaties what she had stoutly refused to the lawyer's arguments and sophistical distinctions, and professing her submission to the authority of the Church, she was allowed to escape.

But she again became a Lutheran, for in 1539 we find her mentioned in a letter of the Duke of Norfolk, the English governor of Berwick, as having been a fugitive in that city "for a good season, and she dare not return for holding our ways." She was not the only fugitive from Scotland for her religion, for Norfolk reports to Cromwell that every day there came to him "some gentlemen and some clerks, fleeing out of Scotland for reading the Scripture in English, saying, that if they were taken they should be put to execution."

Lord Ruthven was "a stout and discreet man in the cause of God." John Stewart, son of that Lord Methven who married the Dowager Queen Margaret, "was a professor of the truth" and was "convict of heresy." William Hay, Earl of Errol, "was learned both in humanity and divinity, and specially well versed in the New Testament. He would rehearse, word by word, the choicest sentences, specially such as served to establish solid comfort in the soul by faith in Christ. He suffered much for the cause of Christ."

Sir John Borthwick, a scholar and soldier, a theologian and courtier, was a Lutheran and tried to convert King

James V to Lutheranism. In 1540 he was accused of having "divers books suspected of heresy, including the New Testament in English, Oecolampadius, Melanchthon, and several treatises of Erasmus;" he was excommunicated and burned in effigy in St. Andrews.

The most striking and impressive proof of the progress of the Reformation made in Scotland at the close of the Hamilton period was shown in the passing of the Act of Parliament, March 15, 1543, introduced by Lord Maxwell, which ordained "that it should be lawful to every man to use the benefit of the translation which then they had of the Bible and New Testament, together with the benefit of other treatises containing wholesome doctrine."

Though later on fresh persecutions broke out for a time, this law was never repealed.

LUTHER ON THE "A DEBITO AD POSSE" FALLACY IN THE DOCTRINE OF CONVERSION.

Christian doctrine can and should be drawn from the clear Word of God alone. "Verbum Dei condit articulos fidei et præterea nemo, ne angelus quidem." What cannot be proved by clear testimonies of the Bible is not a constituent part of Christian theology. On the other hand, every doctrine set forth in clear and unmistakable terms of Holy Writ must be received, believed, and confessed by every true Christian. And when a conflict arises between a clear word of God and human reason, science, or philosophy, the all-sure Word of God must carry it against all objections from all quarters whatever. A Christian must learn to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. To refuse submission to a clear word of the Bible is nothing short of rebellion against the majesty of God Himself.

Human reason *ought* to submit to the clear Word of God; but the Bible and experience teach that, of her own

accord, she *will* not submit. She disdains to listen merely and to learn what the Scriptures teach. She aspires to the cathedra of the Christian Church to display her own wisdom. And in order to obtain the coveted position she will, if need be, disguise herself in the garb of Scripture. She will quote testimonies of the Bible, and as a "gloss" or an "inference" attach to them her own heretical opinions. A forced figure serves her purpose in explaining away a clear but obnoxious doctrine of the Bible. And an alleged "necessary conclusion" from a word of God suffices to palm upon the church her own teachings as pure Scripture doctrine.

Luther says in his profound Treatise on the Bondage of the Will:¹⁾ "See what happened to that trope-inventor, Origen, in expounding the scriptures. What just occasion did he give the calumniator Porphyry, to say, 'those who favor Origen, can be no great friends to Hieronymus.' What happened to the Arians by means of that trope, according to which they made Christ *God nominally*? What happened in our own times to those new prophets concerning the words of Christ, 'This is my body'? One invented a trope in the word 'this,' another in the word 'is,' another in the word 'body.' I have therefore observed this:—that all heresies and errors in the scriptures have not arisen from the simplicity of the words, as is the general report throughout the world, but *from men not attending to the simplicity of the words, and hatching TROPES and CONCLUSIONS out of their own brain.*"

Melanchthon was among the first who endeavored to obtain a hearing in the Lutheran Church for the spurious wisdom of man. By his notorious "NECESSE EST" synergism was established and the scriptural and old Lutheran *sola gratia* and *solī Deo gloria* were overthrown. Melanchthon argued: The Bible plainly teaches that the love of God is universal and embraces Saul as well as David, — *hence it*

1) Cole's translation, p. 190.

necessarily follows that the different conduct of David was the reason why he was elected in preference to Saul, who was rejected.¹⁾ To the numerous passages of Holy Writ on universal grace Melanchthon tacks an inference, hatched out of his own brain, an unscriptural *necesse est*, which, if properly and consistently developed, is destructive of both the Christian *truth* and the Christian *principle of truth*. Of Christian *truth*,—because it substitutes for the divine doctrine of salvation by free grace the human theory of salvation by man's conduct. Of the Christian *principle of truth*,—because it replaces the lawful authority of Holy Writ by the audacious and fallacious pretensions of human reason. While the Bible ascribes the *whole* of man's conversion and salvation to God, Melanchthon, by adding his "*necesse est*" to the Bible, obtains a share of the work and a share of the credit for man.

By the same method of tacking a human inference to a word of Scripture, Pelagians, Semi-Pelagians, and Synergists of all ages, churches, and countries have endeavored to establish the capacity and power of natural man for spiritual acts, especially, for contributing toward his own conversion and salvation. From the Holy Scriptures they quote divine commands and exhortations, and then they infer from their own mind an ability in man to comply with God's behests. From the Bible they prove a certain *praeceptum* or *debitum*, and then they add from the resources of their own reason a corresponding capacity or *posse* in man. They argue: God commands us to repent; hence it is within our power to repent. Or: According to the clear Word of God, man ought to believe the Gospel; hence man is able to believe the Gospel.

1) Melanchthon writes: "Cum promissio sit universalis, nec sint in Deo contradictoriae voluntates, necesse est in nobis esse aliquam discriminis causam, cur Saul abiiciatur, David recipiatur, i. e., necesse est aliquam esse actionem dissimilem in his duobus. Haec dextre intellecta vera sunt, et usus in exercitiis fidei et in vera consolatione, cum acquiescunt animi in Filio Dei monstrato in promissione, illustrabit hanc copulationem causarum, verbi Dei, Spiritus sancti et voluntatis." (Luthardt, *Die Lehre vom freien Willen*, p.178.)

In the days of the Reformation this argument *a debito ad posse*, or a *praecepto ad posse* was the main weapon of the Diatribe of Erasmus in his famous controversy with Luther. The object of Erasmus was to prove a remnant of spiritual powers in natural man. Free-will—he maintained—is “that certain small degree of power which, without the grace of God, is utterly ineffective.”¹⁾ “Moreover”—Erasmus proceeds—“I consider Free-will in this light: that it is a power in the human will by which a man may apply himself to those things which lead unto eternal salvation, or turn away from the same.”²⁾ This theory Erasmus promised to prove by the “canonical Scriptures.” But having searched the Bible in vain for testimonies in proof of his infamous thesis, Erasmus concluded to make short work of it. He simply quoted a great number of divine commands and exhortations, and from his own brain he added as a “necessary conclusion” the ability and capacity in man to do what God requires. But Luther, with the weapon of God’s Word and sound logic, answered

1) Cole, p. 62.

2) Ibid., p. 108. Luther maintains that, in a measure, natural man is free in things pertaining to this world, but he denies his freedom in matters spiritual. He writes: “For although you (Erasmus) think and write wrong concerning Free-will, yet no small thanks are due unto you from me, in that you have rendered my own sentiments far more strongly confirmed, from my seeing the cause of Free-will handled by all the powers of such and so great talents, and so far from being bettered, left worse than it was before: which leaves an evident proof, that *Free-will is a mere lie; and that, like the woman in the Gospel, the more it is taken in hand by physicians, the worse it is made.*” (p. 5.) Again: “But, if we do not like to leave out this term [free-will] altogether (which would be most safe, and also most religious), we may, nevertheless, with a good conscience teach that it be used so far as to allow man a Free-will, not in respect of those which are above him, but in respect only of those things which are below him: that is, he may be allowed to know that he has, as to his goods and possessions, the right of using, acting, and omitting, according to his Free-will; although, at the same time, that same Free-will is overruled by the Free-will of God alone, just as he pleases: but that, God-ward, or in things which pertain unto salvation or damnation, he has no Free-will, but is a captive, slave, and servant, either to the will of God, or to the will of Satan.” (p. 66.)

Erasmus as he deserved, and tore to shreds the sophistic and rationalistic, but specious and well-couched, argument of the Diatribe.¹⁾ Among the Synergists of the schools of Melancthon and Latermann, however, this torn and tattered sophism continued to live and hold its own in spite of the Bible and sound philosophy. And in modern "scientific" theology, which is fairly steeped in synergism and Rationalism, the "great" argument *a praecepto ad posse* has been for decades a staple article.²⁾ To be sure, the Pelagians and Synergists, ever since the defeat of Erasmus, have continued to scour the Bible for testimonies in proof of man's most arrogant and fateful claim. But to the present day they have signally failed to add substantially to

1) Luther admits that Erasmus is his superior in the powers of polished eloquence. "I am" — says he — "but a barbarian and do all things barbarously. . . . But from you, my friend Erasmus, suffer me to obtain the grant of this request: that, as I in these matters bear with your ignorance, so you, in return, would bear with my want of eloquent utterance." (Cole's translation, p. 1. 5.)

2) Dr. Luthardt, having proved from the Old and the New Testament that conversion (repentance and faith) is a work of God, proceeds as follows: "Und doch wird auf der anderen Seite Busse und Glaube als dasjenige bezeichnet, welches der Mensch zu leisten hat, und die Bekehrung von ihm gefordert. *Messias* lautet vom Alten Testament her auf jeder Stufe der Heilsoffenbarung die goettliche Predigt, die sich an den Willen des Menschen richtet. Immer ist, von der Zeit der Propheten an, die *ut possit* die sittliche Grundlegung der Heilszukunft. Und es liegt auf der Hand, dass jener alte Grundsatz, den Luther gegen Erasmus und die strengen Lutheraner gegen die Synergisten so gerne anwandten, hier nicht gilt: *a mandato ad posse non valet consequentia*." (Warum, das weiss Luthardt selber nicht. F. B.) "Gott wuerde die Busse nicht fordern, koennte sie der Mensch nicht leisten. Denn er fordert sie als die unumgaengliche Bedingung des Heils, das er dem Menschen wirklich zugeordnet hat. Und alsbald, sobald der Mensch diesen Zuruf hoert, soll er seiner Forderung auch nachkommen, kann es also auch jederzeit; vgl. Ps. 98, 71. Hebr. 4, 7 ff. Ungleiches wird der Glaube vom Menschen gefordert. *Haecere* verbindet sich in der Regel mit *peravocare*. Und schon dass er als Gehorsam bezeichnet wird, z. B. Roem. 1, 5, zeigt, dass er als ein sittliches Verhalten gemeint ist, welches der Mensch zu leisten hat. . . . Es mag die Gnade dem Menschen noch so nahe kommen, die Thuer muss der Mensch selbst aufmachen, dass Jesus zu ihm eingehe; er muss hoeren auf Jesu Stimme, Apoc. 3, 20." (*Die Lehre vom freien Willen*, p. 426 f.)

the argument of Erasmus. The *a debito ad posse* sophism is the best and most that human reason has been able to do towards establishing natural powers for spiritual acts.

Also in the Lutheran Church of America Synergists of all shades have for decades been wielding this weapon against the champions of the *sola gratia* and the *soli Deo gloria*. One of the latest attempts at battering down the Lutheran doctrine of conversion and election by God's grace only was made in the January number of the *Lutheran Quarterly* by Prof. Richard of Gettysburg. And here, too, the "Long Tom" that he directs against the theological stronghold of Missouri and its allies is none other than the old wooden gun of Erasmus working havoc among such only as fire it.

Prof. Richard purposes to prove that man's conversion is not effected by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit alone, but that man (his intellect and will) enters as a third cause contributing toward his own conversion. He gives full assent to the synergistic doctrine of Melancthon. His very object is to defend and prove the Melancthonian theory of the three concurring causes of conversion, and to refute the doctrine of Missouri and the Formula of Concord, that God alone is the Author of our conversion and salvation. Prof. Richard believes in man's "natural and inherent capability of responding" to impressions of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit. He teaches that the will of natural man in conversion is "a free self-determining personality which has not lost absolutely the image and likeness of God, and whose crowning glory is its essential freedom."¹) He teaches that the Word of God and the Spirit presuppose in the unconverted man "intelligence to discern the truth" and "ability to obey the truth." "No doubt" — says Prof. Richard — "in every New Testament instance where repentance and faith are enjoined, the divine word and Holy Spirit are presupposed to be present,

1) *Lutheran Quarterly*, January, 1904, p. 33.

and to be active both in the mind and in the heart of the hearer of the divine word; but over against the word and the Spirit are set the mind of man with presupposed intelligence to discern the truth, and the will with presupposed ability to obey the truth, and also as having the ability to decline the invitation of the gospel, and to refuse the assistance of the Holy Spirit.¹⁾ In brief: The Gospel presupposes spiritual powers in natural man, in his intellect as well as in his will, and man can and must contribute to the production of his own repentance and faith.²⁾

1) Ibid., p. 65.

2) Heppé, whose teaching on conversion and whose interpretation of the Melancthonian doctrine Prof. Richard adopts, writes: "Indem nun Gott diese Verheissung der Buendensprechung allen denen persönlich darthet, welche das Wort des Evangeliums hoeren, so hengt die Ergraeung dieser Verheissung oder der Glaube an dieselbe von dem Willen der einzelnen Menschen ab. Dieser das Wort vernimmt jeden, Christum im Glauben zu ergreifen, und macht jeden dazu taechtig, sich vom Heiligen Geist ziehen zu lassen." (Dogm. I, p. 329.) In a note Heppé adds: "Auf allen Punkten der Melancthonischen Lehre von der Bekehrung ist es wahrzunehmen, dass das religioes-ethische Interesse der eigentliche Schwerpunkt derselben ist. Der Mensch bedarf einer sittlichen Selbstbestimmung, er muss in einem ersten Kampf gegen sich selbst eingeheuen, muss mit Eifer nach der Gnade und Gerechtigkeit trachten, damit er die sich ihm frei darbietende Gnade wirklich bejahen und ergreifen koenne. Es kommt auf den Menschen an, ob er sich bekehren lassen will oder nicht; denn der Mensch traegt als persoenliches Wesen auch nach dem Buendensfalle den gottesbildlichen Charakter. Der Mensch wird also von Gottes Gnade in der Weise bekehrt, dass er sich dieser gegenueber nicht als todtte Sache, sondern als lebendige, sich selbst bestimmende Person verhaelt. Die Bekehrung des Menschen ist daher nie ein magischer oder mechanischer, sondern immer ein durch und durch sittlicher Vorgang im Menschen. Melancthon erinnert daher (Postil. P. I, p. 713) an die Worte der Offenbarung: 'Siehe, ich stehe vor der Thuere und klopfe an, so jemand meine Stimme hoeren wird und die Thuere aufthun, zu dem werde ich eingehen und das Abendmahl mit ihm halten und er mit mir,' und fragt: wie reht sich dieser Ausspruch zu dem Geschrei: 'homo est habet mere passive?' Denn (taehrt Melancthon S. 765 fort) 'si homo habet se pure passive, tum tractatio esset violenta sine ullo nostro motu aut luctu, aut certe fieret conversio, ut cum aqua infunditur in dolium, Haec imaginationes sunt dependens, quas quidem ipse experientia refutat, quia conversio non fit sine magna luctu, et haec luctu testatur, quod homo non habet se pure passivus.'" (L. c., p. 331 f.)

Such is the bold and bald synergism of Prof. Richard. And he is candid also in confessing the source of his synergistic doctrine. He writes:¹⁾ "In the realm of mind at least, everything is cause, which, in any way, shape or form contributes to the production of psychical effect. And in such realm every cause *in actu*, is simultaneously interlaced with the effect, and is jointly concerned in it, and is at once cause and effect, acting and acted upon. The relation of the two is reciprocal. With this agrees essentially Melancthon's definition of cause: *Causa per se est propria causa. Est autem causa, qua posita in actu, necesse est sequi effectum, conjunctis omnibus per se causis, et qua non posita, non sequitur effectus.* C. R. 13, p. 307. Hence, since the human soul is a self-active entity, it must follow that conversion, which is an effect wrought in the soul, is connected with the activity of mind acted upon and acting. Hence, also, the theory of pure passivity is philosophically, psychologically and theologically untenable. From the very nature of the human mind as potentiality for cause, and as a self-active entity, the will cannot be absolutely *inert* in conversion; for though perception, feeling and willing are not identical, yet they are inseparable. Where and when the one is, there and then the others are. The two last could not exist without the first, and the first would be self-consumed without the renewal and stimulus of the other two. They are all activities of the one identical indivisible conscious *ego*. Hence, when the *ego* perceives the truth, the *ego* feels the truth, the *ego* acts with reference to the truth. A defective philosophy, which does not rightly interpret the relation of cause and effect, and a defective psychology, which does not rightly interpret the activities of the soul, have betrayed Missouri into a defective theology. Of course, however, in matters of theology Missouri repudiates philosophy and psychology as the devil's will-o'-the-wisp, but all the worse for Missouri."

1) *Lutheran Quarterly*, p. 42.

From what he calls philosophy and psychology Prof. Richard carries his error into theology. And as a cure for her "defective" theology he advises Missouri to follow his example. Prof. Richard is a Synergist, because he is a Rationalist. He does not believe that the Word of God is the only source and norm of theology. He believes in drawing Christian doctrines from philosophy and the sciences, and in explaining the Bible accordingly. Instead of searching the Scripture for an answer God alone can give, he turns to philosophy and psychology which do not and cannot answer the questions involved. And whenever philosophy and psychology or any other human science pretend to know what they do not know, or profess to teach spiritual truths which lie beyond their lawful spheres, they are guilty of a *μετάφρασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*, and every loyal Christian, especially every theologian who would not become a traitor to Christianity, is, indeed, bound to repudiate such insane philosophy and science as the "devil's will-o'-the-wisp." However, Prof. Richard is mistaking his own corrupt views for philosophy and psychology. The doctrine which he ascribes to them is a product of his own confused and unphilosophical mind. This is evident from his own statements, for he argues: Psychology teaches that man is a perceiving, feeling, and willing ego; hence it teaches that man contributes toward the production of repentance and faith! Psychology is, indeed, responsible for the above premise; but who is responsible for the inference? Prof. Richard is the culprit, who falsely adorns his synergistic doctrine with the authority of philosophy and psychology. He treats psychology in the same ignoble manner as he does the Bible, and mars a noble science by his wretched inference. He states a fact of psychology, and, instead of really inferring from this fact, he simply adds as an appendage his synergistic doctrine. Between the above-mentioned facts of psychology and the doctrine that man contributes toward the production of faith there never has been and never will

be a logical connection. The synergistic conclusion emanates from Prof. Richard's brain and is merely tacked mechanically to the innocent facts and teachings of philosophy and psychology. It is not philosophy and psychology that militate against the Scripture doctrine of conversion, but Prof. Richard's defective and corrupt views of philosophy and psychology. In his argument he glaringly confounds the questions: What is faith, and, Which is the origin of faith? From the fact that faith is an act of man he infers that it is produced by man. In the same manner Prof. Richard proves that his doctrine is the old Lutheran teaching of the Apology. He quotes: "Faith is not only knowledge in the intellect, but also confidence in the will, that is, it is to will and to accept that which is offered in the promise."¹) From the fact that faith is here correctly defined as "*velle et accipere*" Richard falsely infers that faith is produced by man. Missouri teaches in agreement with the Bible and the Lutheran confessions that faith is indeed an *actus intellectus et voluntatis*, but an *actus*, produced not by man but by the Holy Spirit alone. And this doctrine, though it cannot be *derived* from reason, philosophy, or science, *conflicts* only with corrupt reason, corrupt logic, corrupt philosophy, and corrupt psychology. Throughout the Christian centuries false prophets have flattered themselves that philosophy, science, and deep thinking were responsible for their erroneous teachings in theology. But sound philosophy, logical thinking, and mental acumen never yet have made a man a heretic. And as to Prof. Richard, it is not deep and philosophic but shallow and false thought that has made him a Synergist.

But Prof. Richard is candid also in stating what he rejects. He admits that the Missouri doctrine of conver-

1) Mueller, p. 95: "Sed illa fides, quae justificat, non est tantum notitia historiae, sed est assentiri promissioni Dei, in qua gratis propter Christum offertur remissio peccatorum et justificatio. Et nequis suspicetur tantum notitiam esse, addemus amplius: est velle et accipere oblatam promissionem remissionis peccatorum et justificationis."

sion is in perfect agreement with the Formula of Concord. But he condemns both. With greater boldness than honesty he maintains that, prior to 1577, the three concurring causes theory of Melanchthon was the old Lutheran teaching, of which he declares the doctrine of the Formula of Concord a fraudulent substitute. He writes:¹⁾ "Now, it is well known that within less than twelve months these same six men (Andreae, Selnecker, Musculus, Koerner, Chytraeus, Chemnitz) had transformed the Torgau Book into the Bergic Book; that is, into the Form of Concord, and *had forsaken the old Lutheran doctrine of the will and of conversion*, which, in its essential features, they had only a little while before sought to deliver again to the Church as in perfect harmony with the old Lutheran Confessions, and 'as their own faith, doctrine and confession.' . . . So complete and radical a change of 'faith, doctrine and confession,' in so short a time, has scarcely ever occurred in the Church."²⁾ Prof. Richard does not believe that man's conversion and salvation is *in solidum* a work of God. He quotes and rejects the following sentences of the Formula of Concord:³⁾ "It is certain that conversion to God is the work of the Holy Spirit alone, who is the true author who alone works this in us. . . . The understanding and the will of the unregenerate man are nothing else than the *subjectum convertendum*. . . . In this conversion the will of man, the subject of conversion, does nothing, but merely suffers God to operate in it, until it is regenerated."⁴⁾

1) p. 60 f.

2) On this historical falsehood and Prof. Richard's dishonest method of establishing it, see *Lehre und Wehre*, vol. 50, p. 103—110.

3) p. 59.

4) Luther teaches "that the mercy of God alone does all things, and that our own will does nothing, but is rather acted upon: and so it must be, otherwise the whole is not ascribed unto God." (Cole, p. 24.) Again: "This word [John 1, 12] also is a hammer that beats down Free-will, as is nearly the whole of the Evangelist John, and yet, even this is brought forward in support of Free-will. Let us, I pray you, just look into this word. John is not speaking concerning any work of man, either great or

But what engages our attention more than Prof. Richard's coarse synergism itself is the *method* by which he endeavors to prove it. In the first place, he quotes a number of Bible passages which completely refute his own theory. He writes: "That conversion is a work of divine grace is taught already in the Old Testament, where God promises a new heart, and where the saints express their longings for a new heart. 'I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord,' Jer. 24, 7. 'I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh,' Ezek. 11, 19. 'Create within me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me,' Ps. 51, 10. In the New Testament the new birth is represented as a work of the Spirit: 'Except a man be born anew' (margin: *from above*); 'Except a man be born of water and the Spirit,' John 3, 3. 5; and the Christian life is represented as a deliverance from death: 'When we were dead through our trespasses God quickened us together with

small, but concerning the very renewal and transformation of the old man who is a son of the devil, into the new man who is a son of God. This man is merely passive (as the term is used), nor does he do anything, but is wholly made; and John is speaking of being made; he saith we are made the sons of God by a power given unto us from above, not by the power of Free-will inherent in ourselves. . . . The meaning of John is this. — That by the coming of Christ into the world by his Gospel, by which grace was offered, but not works required, a full opportunity was given to all men of becoming the sons of God, if they would believe. But as to this willing and this believing on his name, as Free-will never knew it nor thought of it before, so much less could it then do it of its own power. For how could reason then think that faith in Jesus as the Son of God and man was necessary, when even at this day it could neither receive nor believe it, though the whole creation should cry out together — there is a certain person who is both God and man! Nay, it is rather offended at such a saying, as Paul affirms, 1 Cor. 1: so far is it from possibility that it should either will it, or believe it. John, therefore, is preaching, not the power of Free-will, but the riches of the kingdom of God offered to the world by the Gospel; and signifying at the same time how few there are who receive it; that is, from the enmity of the Free-will against it; the power of which is nothing else than this: — Satan reigning over it and causing it to reject grace, and the Spirit which fulfills the Law." (p. 183 f.)

Christ,' Eph. 2, 5. 'Being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you did he quicken together with him,' Col. 2, 13; and everything is ascribed to grace: 'By the grace of God I am what I am,' 1 Cor. 15, 5. Compare 1 Cor. 4, 7; and repentance is said to be a divine gift: 'To give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins,' Acts 5, 30. 'To the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life;' Acts 11, 18: 'If peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the faith,' 2 Tim. 2, 25; and the entire work of salvation is ascribed to God: 'By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, that no man should glory,' Eph. 2, 8."

These testimonies, which could be multiplied indefinitely, are, indeed, a complete refutation of the synergistic theory and a powerful confirmation of the doctrine of the Formula of Concord by *Prof. Richard himself*. However, in order to clinch his involuntary argument against synergism, Richard could have added another class of passages which directly deny the alleged *ability* and assumed *power* of natural man for spiritual acts. Prof. Pieper, in *Lehre und Wehre*,¹⁾ refers to John 6, 44. Rom. 8, 7. 1 Cor. 2, 14. In the first passage Christ declares: "No man *can* (δύναται) come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." In the natural and unconverted man there is, according to these words of Christ, neither the *act* of believing nor the "pre-supposed" *ability* to believe. Rom. 8, 7 Paul, describing the carnal, *i. e.*, the unconverted man, says: "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed *can* be (οὐδὲ γὰρ δύναται)." Here Paul avers that the unconverted man is void of both the spiritual *acts* required by the Law and the *power or ability* for such acts. The same apostle, speaking of the attitude of natural man to the Gospel, writes 1 Cor. 2, 14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit

1) p. 100 f.

of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither *can* (*δύνανται*) he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Of the spiritual knowledge of the Gospel, which is identical with true faith, Paul here declares that neither this knowledge itself nor the *ability* for receiving it inheres in natural man.¹⁾ All these and similar passages, together with the testimonies quoted by Prof. Richard, take conver-

1) On the spiritual blindness of natural man Luther remarks in his Treatise on the Bondage of the Will: "For to this power applies that which Christ and the evangelists so often bring forward out of Is. 6, 'Hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive.' What is this else but saying, that Free-will, or the human heart, is so bound by the power of Satan, that, unless it be quickened up in a wonderful way by the Spirit of God, it cannot of itself see or hear those things which strike against the eyes and ears so manifestly, as to be as it were palpable by the hand? So great is the misery and blindness of the human race! Thus also the evangelists themselves, when they wondered how it could be that the Jews were not won over by the works and words of Christ, which were evidently incontrovertible and undeniable, satisfied themselves from that place of the Scripture, where it is shewn, that man, left to himself, seeing seeth not, and hearing heareth not. And what can be more monstrous! 'The light (saith Christ) shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not,' John 1! Who could believe this? Who hath heard the like—that the light should shine in darkness, and yet, the darkness still remain darkness, and not be enlightened!" (Cole, p. 102.) Again: "Here, where Christ openly saith, 'They know not what they do,' does he not testify that they could not will good? For how can you will that which you do not know? You certainly cannot desire that of which you know nothing! What more forcible can be advanced against Free-will, than that it is such a thing of naught, that it not only cannot will good, but cannot even know what evil it does, and what good is?" (Cole, p. 182.) On the spiritual incapability of the natural man Luther remarks: "Now let us see what his opinion is concerning the endeavor and the power of Free-will in the carnal, who are in the flesh. 'They cannot please God.' Again, 'The carnal mind is death.' Again, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' And again, 'It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' Here let the advocate for Free-will answer me—How can that endeavor toward good, 'which is death,' which 'cannot please God,' which 'is enmity against God,' which 'is not subject to God,' and 'cannot' be subject to him? Nor does Paul mean to say, that the carnal mind is dead and inimical to God; but that, it is death itself, enmity itself, which cannot possibly be subject to the law of God or please God; as he had said just before, 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did,' etc." (Cole, p. 349.)

sion and salvation entirely out of the hands of man and place it exclusively where it belongs, in the hands of God.¹⁾

Having himself shattered his own theory Prof. Richard proceeds to establish it. Indeed, he is not able to quote a single passage from the Bible which makes for his synergism. Still, he is bound to prove it at all hazards. How does he accomplish it? He argues:²⁾ "This class of passages [quoted above] seems to take salvation entirely out of our hands, and to place it exclusively in the hands of God. But there is a class of passages addressed to man, in which he is required to *do* something, and is described as *doing* something. Repentance and faith are *required* of man as *acts* which he can perform. 'To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts,' Ps. 95, 7. 8. Here a demand is made upon those who hear the word of God. If man has no ability to harden his heart, then to command him not to harden it, is worse than superfluous. But the ability to do a thing implies the ability to choose not to do it. 'Let us give diligence to enter into that rest,' Hebr. 4, 11. This is an exhortation, and every exhortation implies free-

* 1) Prof. Richard's object is to take a part of the work of man's conversion and salvation out of the hands of God and to place it in the hands of man. Yet he claims to be an Old Lutheran. But what a gulf between the theological spirit of Prof. Richard and Luther who wrote: "As to myself, I openly confess, that I should not wish Free-will to be granted me, even if it could be so, nor anything else to be left in my own hands, whereby I might endeavor something towards my own salvation. And that, not merely because in so many opposing dangers, and so many assaulting devils, I could not stand and hold it fast (in which state no man could be saved, seeing that one devil is stronger than all men); but because, even though there were no dangers, no conflicts, no devils, I should be compelled to labor under a continual uncertainty, and to beat the air only. Nor would my conscience, even if I should live and work to all eternity, ever come to a settled certainty, how much it ought to do in order to satisfy God. For whatever work should be done, there would still remain a scrupling, whether or not it pleased God, or whether he required anything more; as is proved in the experience of all justiciaries, and as I myself learned to my bitter cost, through so many years of my own experience." (Cole, p. 369.)

2) *Lutheran Quarterly*, p. 63 f.

dom of choice and action. Repentance is *required* of man as something he *can do*, and as a *conditio sine qua non* of the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2, 38. . . . Repentance is *described* as something that man *can do* and *must do*. 'Repent ye,' to which is joined: 'Believe in the gospel,' Mark 1, 15. 'Except ye repent, ye shall in like manner perish,' Luke 13, 3. Repentance is also joined with turning. 'Repent ye therefore and turn again,' ἐπιστρέψατε, 'to turn about, turn back,' Acts 3, 19, and is used with reference to 'turning from idols,' with a purpose of 'serving a living and true God,' 1 Thess. 1, 9. 'They turned to the Lord,' Acts 9, 35. 'Bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto the Lord,' Acts 14, 15. In all these places repentance is represented and commanded as something that men can do and should do, after they have heard the gospel. In 1 Pet. 2, 25 this *turning* is clearly represented as a voluntary act: 'For ye were going astray like sheep; but are now returned (ἐπιστρέφητε) unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.' Believing is described as an *act*, and is enjoined. . . . To command a person to repent and to believe, on the presupposition that he has no power to repent and to believe, is hypocritical mockery; and every person who repents and believes is conscious of a psychical action which is his own, and for which he alone is responsible, whatever may have been the impulse or the assistance from without."

Prof. Richard quotes a number of divine commands and exhortations, and then attaches to each of them his synergistic doctrine as an inference. He cites a divine command, and "infers" that man is *able* to do the thing he is commanded to do. He quotes an exhortation and "*concludes*" that a corresponding power and ability inheres in man. But Prof. Richard's alleged "inference" is not a logical fruit of his premise, but a strange product, tied to it mechanically, as dolls and watches, cakes and fruit to a Christmas tree. Judged by his article against Missouri (a veritable

jungle of irrelevant quotations, historical falsehoods, and logical fallacies), Prof. Richard entertains extremely crude and primitive views on the relation between a premise and a conclusion. He confounds mechanical juxtaposition of two thoughts with logical connection. He does not seem to know that an inference cannot legitimately include an element which is not contained in the premises. The passages which Prof. Richard quotes do not in the least make or witness for synergism. Yet the affixed conclusion does contain the synergistic doctrine. Whence this strange element? Prof. Richard's product is greater than his factors allow! Like an Indian juggler he manages to get more out of a Bible passage than it contains. How does he accomplish it? His argument is the old fallacy *a praecepto ad posse*, which, in syllogistic form, may be stated as follows: What God demands man is able to do; God does demand repentance and faith: hence man has the power and ability to repent and believe. The minor premise of this syllogism Prof. Richard profusely proves from the Bible. But in proof of the major premise he offers absolutely nothing. He does not even formulate it. Perhaps, because he himself was ashamed of seeing and exhibiting it in black and white. Yet, he cannot have been ashamed of entertaining it in his mind, for it is the only logical source of his conclusion. Does Prof. Richard really endorse the major premise required by his argument? He declares:¹⁾ "To command a person to repent and to believe, on the presupposition that he has no power to repent and to believe, is *hypocritical mockery*." Evidently Prof. Richard's argument does silently assume and presuppose, as a self-evident axiom, the theological enormity that fallen man is able to do what God commands. And without further ado he declares his synergistic inference (the ability to repent and believe inheres in man) a well-founded doctrine of theology, witnessed for

1) p. 65.

by philosophy and psychology, by an "entire body of passages" of the Bible, and by the testimony of the saints, and the denial of which involves "hypocritical mockery" in God. But in spite of this Philistine boast the above major premise as well as the conclusion are and remain, as shown above by Prof. Richard himself, in glaring conflict with the clear Word of God. From Genesis to Revelation the Bible is a continuous and loud protest against the monstrous doctrine that fallen man is able to do what God commands, able to repent and believe. Prof. Richard's assumed major, as well as his inferred conclusion, amount to nothing less than a total denial of Christianity and a complete restoration of heathenism.¹⁾

And as to the "goodly fellowship of saints," Prof. Richard, beyond doubt, is able to quote a great number of theologians in favor of his doctrine. Pelagius and his adherents, the mediaeval sophists, Erasmus, Melanchthon, Pfeffinger, Latermann, and a great number of modern theologians are ready to witness for man's activity in conversion. Moreover, Prof. Richard has the "goodly fellow-

1) Of Erasmus Luther wrote in a letter to Amsdorf (Cole, p. 384 f.): "Nay, there can be no doubt in the mind of a true believer, who has the Spirit in his nostrils, that his (Erasmus' mind) is alienated from, and utterly hates, all religion together; and especially, the religion of Christ. Many proofs of this are scattered here and there. And it will come to pass by and by, that, like the mole, he will throw up some dirt, that will shew where and what he is, and prove his own destruction. . . . In his letter upon 'Christian philosophy,' which is published with his New Testament, and used in common throughout all the churches, when he had propounded the question, — 'Why Christ, so great a teacher, descended from heaven, when there are many things taught even among the heathens which are precisely the same, if not more perfect,' — he answers, 'Christ came (which I doubt not but he believed most Erasmianly) from heaven, that he might exemplify those things more perfectly and more fully than any of the saints before him!' Thus, this miserable renewer of all things, Christ (for so he reproaches the Lord of glory), has lost the glory of a Redeemer, and becomes only one more holy than others." The assumed major premise, "What God commands, man can do," made Erasmus what is now called a liberal theologian.

ship" of millions of unbelievers and thousands of heathen philosophers and scientists who are all willing to testify: *Suae quisque fortunae faber est*. Indeed, for his monstrous major premise he may even quote "Saint" Kant, the great "philosopher of Protestantism," who wrote: "Denn wenn das moralische Gesetz gebietet, wir *sollen* jetzt bessere Menschen sein, so *folgt* unumgaenglich, wir muessen es auch *koennen*." To be sure, Prof. Richard does not lack fellowship. But what he is not able to do is to quote, in confirmation of his synergism and sophism, a single syllable of the Holy Bible, or the voice of a single heart in Christendom. There never has been, and there never will be, a Christian who, in his innermost soul, can say and will say: "My conversion and salvation I owe, in part at least, to the efforts of my own will." There is not a heart in Christendom but abhors both Prof. Richard's assumption and inference as rank heathenism and a complete denial of the Christian *sola gratia* and *solī Deo gloria*. Yea, if Prof. Richard is a Christian, his head will lack the fellowship of his own heart. His own heart will condemn his own synergistic and sophistic mind, and give the lie to the impious productions of his own brain. Erasmus, too, in his controversy with Luther, appealed to the "saints." But Luther reminded him of a double fact: 1. That real saints, when defending free-will, argue from their confused heads, instead of testifying out of their Christian hearts; 2. that "many were accounted saints on earth whose souls are now in hell."¹

But reason, logic, philosophy—they, too, raise their voices in condemnation of Prof. Richard's fallacy *a debito ad posse*. According to Scripture this synergistic argument consists of one truth, sandwiched between two falsehoods. And though sound philosophy, based on natural facts, neither denies nor maintains Prof. Richard's minor

1) Cole, p. 71 ff.

premise (the power to repent and believe inheres in man), because it pertains to the spiritual sphere of knowledge, of which philosophy is ignorant, yet it *does* condemn from its own knowledge, based on universal experience, the major premise which Prof. Richard silently assumes as a self-evident axiom (man can do what God commands him to do). Logic, finally, declares a syllogism with but one premise (which is all that is left, if Prof. Richard should repudiate his silent major) a logical monster. And (if Prof. Richard should determine to retain it) an inference from a disputed premise is condemned by logic as a *petitio principii* or a fallacy *ex non concessis tamquam concessis*.

Hence, the argument *a praecepto ad posse*, on which Prof. Richard rests his synergistic theology, is according to the joint verdict of Scripture, sound philosophy, and logic a stupid fallacy, neither more nor less. It is of a category with the fallacies *a posse ad esse*, or, *ab esse ad necesse esse*. And it requires neither logical acumen nor training to see through the utter futility of this sophism. Why, according to Prof. Richard a cobbler might argue: I *ought* to make well-fitting shoes; hence I *can*! A physician: I *ought* to cure my patient; hence I am *able* to do it! A creditor might say to an insolvent debtor: You *ought* to pay; hence you *can* pay! Abel to Cain: You *ought* to restore my life; hence you are *able* to do it! A preacher to the godless: You *ought* to love God above all things and your neighbor as yourselves; hence you *can* do it.—And if Prof. Richard would develop and perfect his method of arguing by adding the inference *a posse ad esse*, and *ab esse ad necesse esse*—what miracles could he work in this dull and stupid world of ours! Profligates and drunkards, after a debauch, could quiet their consciences by philosophizing à la Richard: We *should* have been sober and pure; hence we *could* have been sober and pure; hence we really *have* been sober and pure; hence, of necessity, we *must* have been sober and pure! What a downy pillow, too, it must afford poor Richard after

writing a wretched article like the one against Missouri, to feel himself enabled by his new method of inference to reason: You *ought* to have argued truthfully, logically, and scripturally against Missouri; hence you *could* have argued thus; hence you really *have* argued thus; hence it is *impossible* for you to have argued otherwise.

However, as indicated by the title of this article, our object at present is not to handle Prof. Richard ourselves, but to turn him over to Luther. Prof. Richard claims to be a true Lutheran, an Old Lutheran.¹⁾ May he receive his well-merited rewards at the hands of his acknowledged master. In his answer to the Diatribe of Erasmus Luther, *ex professo*, expatiates on the *a praecepto ad posse* argument in the doctrine of conversion. And if Prof. Richard will consent to give Luther, whom we shall freely quote, a patient hearing, he will, we doubt not, experience the truth of the saying: . . . "*Quid rides? Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur.*"

(To be concluded.)

F. B.

Book Review.

The Life of Dr. Martin Luther. By Ernst August Brueggemann. St. Louis, Mo. Concordia Publishing House. 1904. 136 pages. Cloth cover. Price, 60 cts.; gilt edge, 85 cts.

We recommend this Life of Luther to our Christian homes and schools for its lucid arrangement, its perspicuous and simple style, and its numerous illustrations.

F. B.

1) Erasmus, too, was commonly called a Lutheran. "But"—says Luther—, "as Christ liveth, they do him a great injury who call him a Lutheran, and I will defend him against his enemies: for I can bear a true and faithful testimony that he is no Lutheran, but Erasmus himself." From the following quotations it will appear that Prof. Richard, by claiming to be an Old Lutheran, inflicts a similar injury upon himself.